THE UNDERSTANDING HEART

SAMUEL M. CROTHERS

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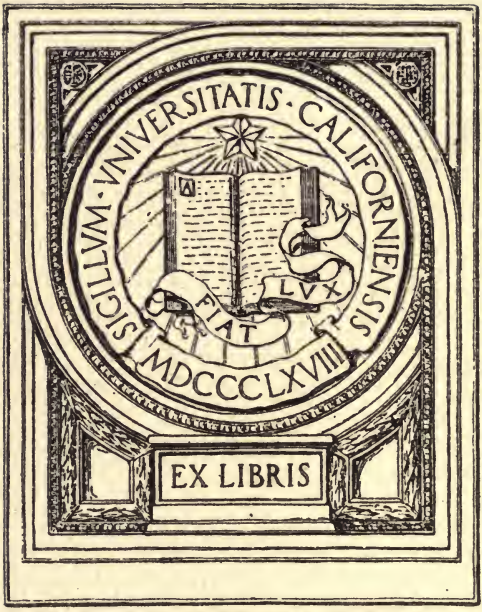
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UNDERSTANDING HEART

The Understanding Heart

BY

SAMUEL M. CROTHERS

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INTRODUCTION

WORDSWORTH describes the man of "understanding heart." His thoughts

> "From a clear fountain flowing, he looks around
> And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks."

He is no mere sentimentalist; nor is he a cold rationalist. He believes in the instincts of his own heart; yet he is anxious to preserve

> "His sanity of reason not impaired."

He has reverence for inherited faiths, yet he would subject them to that scepticism through which alone the true may be distinguished from the false.

There are those whose ideal of truth-seeking is that of a heartless understand-

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ing. They take for granted that they are living in an unfriendly universe, in which the affections of the soul meet nothing but disappointment. They seek to prepare themselves for clear seeing by discrediting all that belongs to their emotions.

There are others who do not believe in any such line of cleavage between the faculties of their own nature. They believe in themselves as profoundly as they believe in the Universe. They believe in great spiritual ideals of love and duty and worship. In these they trust primarily on the testimony of their own hearts; but they find their faith stimulated and sustained by their experience. To them religion is not

> "A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was.
> For the discerning intellect of man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these
> A simple produce of the common day."

Those who have come to this point of view find in the formal creeds only suggestions, and not satisfactory answers to their questions. What is called "systematic theology" is altogether too ambitious for them. They are anxious to know not how one doctrine may be brought into logical consistency with another doctrine, but rather how it may fit into this goodly universe, and how it may interpret the happenings of the common day.

To minds of this temper the present organization of religion in our churches seems open to criticism. The criticism is friendly and hopeful, but radical in its character. The great impression is that of vast resources that have not been touched, mighty powers that are allowed to run to waste. We talk of man as a spiritual being; but how little of his spiritual energy is recognized, while still less of it is utilized! Religious teachers seem to be afraid of religion when it manifests

itself in unconventional forms. We have not yet succeeded in organizing all the forces of what we call the higher life.

The problems of the understanding heart are educational. The religious nature tries to understand itself and its real place in the universe. Now the universe is not a fixed quantity. It is continually changing. No one form of thought can express its reality. The man thinking must be free to follow the new developments as well as to chronicle the old.

The real problems are those which grow out of necessity of continual readjustment. How may our ideals be adjusted to the actual conditions which we meet? How may our religious inheritance be harmonized with our fresh experiences? How may the institutions which have purely spiritual ends be adjusted to those which serve our material welfare? How may we at the same time live according to the rules of sound reason and

according to the inspirations of religious faith?

Such questions come to us all. In the following chapters I have taken for granted that there is need of readjustment, intellectually and spiritually, if religion is to hold its own. This readjustment, however, can be no merely formal one. It must come through the multitudes of men and women who are doing their work and entering into all joyous activities with an understanding heart. It is through them that the religion of the world is being reorganized.

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I

Methods of Teaching

METHODS OF TEACHING

The church and the school-house have always stood near one another. At one time the school-house stood under the shadow of the church. The whole process of education was controlled by ecclesiastical ideals. To-day the relative positions have been reversed.

The theory of the school has been enlarged, and its methods have been revolutionized. The church has, however, responded only slowly, and under compulsion, to the influences of the times. The result is that there is a strained relation between the two institutions which stand for the development of the complete man.

The young men and women who graduate from our schools find many of the doctrines of the church foreign to their

thoughts. It is not that they actively deny them: it is rather that they seem to belong to a different world. The conclusions rest in the air, and have nothing corresponding to them in actual experience.

The same difficulty is experienced in attitude of the professed teachers of religion. The decrease in the number of candidates for the ministry in all our colleges is no accident. It is a part of the conflict between the present condition of the church and the existing state of secular education.

A young man with a spiritual nature and with a genuine ambition for human helpfulness goes to college with the intention of fitting himself for what he considers the most sacred calling in the world. It is a great ideal that inspires him. He wishes to give himself to the best possible work, and he is in no mood to tolerate the "second best."

In the college he meets men who are

devoted to the disinterested search for truth. He becomes familiar with the habits of grave and severe study. He meets men whose callings require no apology, so obviously are they ministering to real needs. These men go from the college to the professional school with no break in their line of activity. It is all made of one piece. On the other hand, the student of theology seems to belong to a different order. His special studies seem to be remote and unrelated to the things he cares for. Above all, they do not seem to be carried on with that freedom and candor that he has learned to consider essential. The very term "free thought" as used in theological circles, sometimes as a term of reproach and sometimes defiantly as a party cry, seems strange to him. What other kind of thought can there be but free thought?

If he enters the ministerial profession, the same kind of questions await him. He is to teach religion; but what does

that mean? Is there a body of definitely ascertained facts to be promulgated? If so, what is it? Or does spiritual culture, like physical culture, mean the development of certain powers in the individual?

The main difficulty lies not in doctrinal results, but in the methods by which any results are achieved. The church has not yet shaken itself free from the trammels of the old scholasticism. It is attempting to teach religion as nothing else is now taught in a good school.

What was the characteristic of scholasticism? We may say that it was concerned with the circumference of any subject rather than with its centre. Its chief emphasis lay in definition. Shakespeare described it in a sentence: "Define, define, well-educated infant."

To put a thought into words, and then to subject the words to minute examination, to distinguish one form of words from another, and to draw inferences which themselves depended solely on

verbal definitions,— this was an exercise for nimble wits. The logical faculty grew abnormally acute; but there was little inquiry as to the correspondence between these words and the actual experience of mankind. It was as if the mind were independent of anything outside itself.

Sir Philip Sidney contrasts the method of the philosopher with that of the poet. The philosophers, he says, "go, casting largess as they go of definitions and distinctions," while the poet "beginneth not with obscure definitions, . . . but he cometh with a tale that holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney corner." These endless distinctions and definitions formed a part of what Milton called "the barbarous ignorance of the schools."

The very word "scholastic" recalls what the schools once were. But, when we go to the best schools, to-day, we find that the method is much nearer that of Sir Philip Sidney's poet than that of

his formal philosopher. The teacher begins not with an abstract definition, but with the thing itself. The pupil is trained to observe, to compare, to appreciate. The whole subject is not forced upon him. He takes only so much as he is prepared for, and goes on from one partial view to another. The point is that it is a view, and not merely a hearsay report which is given him.

This change in the method of teaching corresponds to an advance in psychology. The old psychology treated the mind as if it were an object capable of exact definition. There was just so much of it, and it could be bounded as one might bound a country. The old English ballad, "My mind to me a kingdom is," expressed the idea literally.

Here is the child, the heir to a kingdom. That kingdom is his by divine right, but it must be surveyed and its boundaries fixed. The kingdom has its separate provinces. The different func-

tions of the mind were spoken of as if they were absolutely definite things. There was department of the understanding, the province of the will, and so on: these were set down and distinguished and divided one from another.

The modern psychologist knows nothing of this formal kingdom. He is not even sure that any particular person is heir to it all. He is not very careful about the "spheres of influence" which are supposed to belong to any particular faculty. He is rather concerned with the states of consciousness, and these states of consciousness are always changing. When he comes to consider these states of consciousness, he sees that in every state of consciousness there is one focal point and there is an ill-defined margin. When he speaks of "the field of consciousness," he no longer speaks as if it were a field upon the earth that may be defined and fenced off: it is rather like the magnetic field. When he speaks of the coherence

of ideas, he is no longer thinking of a fixed and inevitable relation. It is a relation which is dependent on the forces active at the moment. It is more like the coherer which belongs to Marconi's system of wireless telegraphy. The little bits of metal filings are separate. Then from afar comes a mysterious influence, and the minute particles come together and form an electric circuit. Then they are shaken apart again, until with the new message they once more come together. So under successive impulses the mind is continually being rearranged. The centre of interest is all the time changing.

Modern education rests upon this vital conception of the dynamic character of the mind. The teacher does not think of a faculty called the understanding being at work while the affections are not enlisted and the imagination is dormant. Thinking is something different from that. The whole mind is centred upon one point. The more complete the concen-

tration, the greater will be the accomplishment.

In the teaching of religion, a revolution is effected when we come to this idea that we are dealing primarily with states of consciousness and centres of interest. Religion is not a subject to be formally defined: it is a great experience into which we may enter. The dogmatist has his thought fixed upon the circumference, the outer edge of religion. He is jealous of all encroachments: he is always eager to defend the frontiers. He is ready to tell just what is the holy faith which it is necessary for every man to believe.

Catechetical instruction is based on this idea. It takes for granted that there is a precise and sufficient answer for every question. "What is God?" it asks, and the reply is couched in language that may satisfy the metaphysicians. The metes and bounds of the Divine Nature are fixed, and the limits of human responsibility are indicated. The last things are

put first, and the abstract formula prepared before there is anything to put into it.

The child can be taught to repeat the answers correctly. The forms of thought may be accepted, and the tradition of the church may be handed down. But is this teaching religion? Does the child learn how to think seriously and freely upon the greatest subjects of human concern? Is not the effect rather to deaden the natural feeling of wonder and curiosity with which he might otherwise look out on the world? Premature ideas have been forced upon him, and his own ideas have not been allowed to ripen.

A true method of religious education begins with the things near at hand, and which already are of vital interest. The teacher takes advantage of the circumstances of the child's own life and of his natural relations to awaken interest in all higher things. It is taken for granted that he is already a worshipper. There is

something to which he looks up with admiration. This "trick of looking up" is itself a religious experience. It is looking God-ward. One object after another is presented to his view. Each is a symbol only, but it is a symbol of the highest reality. The symbols become more spiritual, more profoundly ethical, as he grows toward maturity; but there is no break from the beginning of the process to the end. At no time does he arrive at a complete definition of God; and yet "himself from God he cannot free," and he is continually learning more and more in regard to his relations to Him.

The fixing of attention upon the centre rather than on the circumference relieves the teacher, also, of his chief embarrassment in dealing with mature minds. It is noteworthy that in the last generation the chief anxiety of the defenders of religious faith was in regard to the limits of human knowledge. Take that word "agnosticism" which was accepted as a denial of

the possibility of religion. Agnosticism is simply the assertion of our ignorance upon certain points. We are all agnostics in regard to some questions. There are many things which we are willing to confess lie beyond our present knowledge, even, perhaps, beyond our powers of knowing. But what of it?

The man of science frankly confesses that he has no answer to many most important questions in regard to the physical world. But this does not paralyze his effort. His mind is intently fixed upon the things which he already knows, and upon those which immediately invite him. The unanswered or unanswerable questions are on the margin of his consciousness. They can wait.

Such a wholesome attitude must be that of the teacher of religion who adopts the same method. He, too, has his unanswered questions; but he, too, has his own work, and his work steadies him. He is not troubled by the thing which

he does not know: he is too much interested in those discoveries in the spiritual life which have been made or which are immediately before him.

It is not necessary to "reconcile Science and Religion." The attempt to do so implies that one has a complete mastery of both. But one question after another, as it comes within the sphere of our real interests, may be treated with a scientific desire for truth, and with a desire to get from it its religious values. As we go on in this way, we find that they need no reconciliation, but are seen to belong to one great order.

In like manner the practical problems of the church are simplified when we approach them from the standpoint of the enlightened teacher. We hear complaints of the indifference of various classes in the community to religion. We hear complaints of the young people, of business men, of workingmen, and the rest. It is taken for granted that the need is for

some sensational methods by which they may be startled into attention.

But is not the problem really an educational one? Here are great subjects in which many persons, we say, are not interested.

Why should they be interested in them? We are not surprised to learn that the average workingman is not interested in the latest discoveries in Babylonia or in the higher mathematics. They are remote from his affairs.

But he is interested in his own welfare, the welfare of his family and of his neighbors. He is capable of being profoundly stirred by a struggle through which he may be freed from unjust conditions. He has his ideals and his hopes. Here is a vital system of interests: the problem of the teacher of religion is to connect these with still larger and more vital interests. The man already has a sense of justice. Let the just thing he already recognizes be the means of gaining larger and still larger

views. He already loves something and admires something. Here is the beginning of all true worship. Let it grow from more to more.

The changes that are taking place in all the relations of life demand a kind of religious education that shall fit men to recognize the spiritual possibilities of the new world. They must be able to deal with the complex as well as with the simple forms of goodness. The revolutionary forces must be used as well as those which are conservative, if any great thing is to be accomplished.

Mr. Benjamin Kidd, in his book on "Western Civilization," has a phrase which is illuminating. He says that the permanency of any power in the Western world is dependent on the degree of its "projected efficiency." In a finished civilization it might be enough to deal wisely with what had already been accomplished; but in a progressive civilization the important factor is not the past, but

the immediate future. The ability to see what is impending, or even, when we cannot see, to grapple with it instinctively, is that which insures survival. The vital question is not, How correctly have we interpreted the past? but, How far have we projected ourselves into the future?

This is the task of the trained intelligence. It is prepared to make those successive readjustments which are necessary.

Christianity has more than once been threatened with extinction, and it has survived through its power of adaptation. At the time when the Roman civilization perished, it seemed that the Christian faith must fall with it. It was saved through the projected efficiency of certain missionaries who, in the forests of the north, were laboring with the future masters of the world. The Roman legions could not prevent the progress of the hosts of barbarians; but the barbarians themselves were converted.

We need an education that shall teach

us to deal "justly, skilfully, and magnanimously," not only with the powers that be, but also with the powers that are to be. We must meet them more than halfway.

Who are to be the rulers of America in the next generation? Where are they living? What are they thinking? What are their dreams? The new multitudes pouring into our land, the struggle of workingmen, the changed conditions of social life,—all these are central to the teacher of religion.

There is the call for more thoughtfulness; but it is not to be an academic exercise, but a serious grappling with living issues. The result will be not a systematic body of divinity, but a clearer and more inspiring outlook upon the actual world.

"Large elements in order brought,
And tracts of calm from tempests made,
And world-wide fluctuations swayed
In vassal tides that follow thought."

II

The Sense of Values

THE SENSE OF VALUES

One great difference between the modern school and the ordinary church lies in the temper with which questions of fact are approached. The teacher may be insufficiently prepared, but at least he is not afraid of his subject. He does not suspect it of any sinister designs against his peace of mind. There it is: his only business is to try to understand it.

On the other hand, one is conscious on entering the church of a certain attitude of suspicion. The fact may be dangerous: it may lead to unwelcome conclusions. Serious examination is discouraged as being only "destructive criticism."

The cause of this attitude is not far to seek. The teacher of religion finds himself in an ambiguous position because he has also allowed himself to be placed

in the position of the advocate of a creed. He is to preserve the faith which was "once delivered to the saints." He feels that the sanctities of the past are in his keeping, and thinks, "beyond his sentry, beat the crystal walls in danger." A certain intellectual timidity is the inevitable result of this false attitude.

The first necessity in a sound religious training is such a discipline as will release the mind from all such timidity and teach a noble freedom. One must overcome the morbid fear of error if he would engage in a manly search for truth.

To do this, we must free ourselves from the superstition that in the great days of the past there were forces at work which are now exhausted. If that were so, then the problem of religion would be simply that of the preservation of a limited treasure. We are freed when we realize that there is more where these good things came from.

A timid piety sees the things which

have already been accomplished, the results of the experiments of the past. It fears to lose them in some new experiment. It advises a parsimony of effort. The lessons it draws from experience are prudential. It is wise only in avoiding mistakes. It says: "Here is a place where God may be found. Here is a well-trodden path along which the saints have walked. As for the rest of the world, it is full of pitfalls: we know not whether it be God's world or not." There is here the courage of *established* convictions, but not the finer courage of fresh conviction.

Now behind that advice there is a lack of faith, and a false philosophy. A man sees the good that is already, here and there, produced through human effort. He believes in the result; but he has not learned, as yet, that larger faith in the ceaseless effort which has produced that result, and he has not yet learned that deep confidence that finds in this universe

an inexhaustible supply of spiritual power. It is true that there is not a single religion that has not some truth in it, not one but has said to self-weary men, "Ye must be born again," not one but has in some way quickened the soul, in some way given access to the infinite. That is true, if indeed there be an infinite world; that is true, if indeed there be a God behind all we see. We cannot help but touch Him. We cannot help finding Him in some way when we earnestly seek. That justifies the struggle of the past, but it also justifies the new struggle of the present. It justifies the man who is willing to make his life a sublime adventure, the man who is willing to take a step that to his knowledge, at least, has never been taken before. He also is in God's world. He also shall find something, even though it be not altogether that which he has dreamed of at the beginning.

The world goes on not because there is an exact correspondence between a certain

definite body of good and a definite number of those who seek for good, because every aim is reached, because every life puts forth its strength wisely and prudently: the world goes on because the seeds of life are everywhere sown broadcast, because out of multitudes of failures here and there is a supreme achievement. "Thou canst not know which will perish, this or that." What each one of us can know is, that the world goes on, our lives go on, because in human hearts there is an infinitude answering to the infinitude that is without us,— the infinitude of courage, of love, of desire. The one thing which we ask for in each new generation is not wisdom, but the courage and strength out of which alone wisdom comes.

Among the gulches of our Western mountains one may still see the placer miner at his work in his wasteful, crude way, extracting the gold from the gravel of the streams; and all day long he stands by the sluice, shovelling in the gravel and

seeing it washed away by the water. All day he is engaged in that apparently useless work, not selecting, but laboring on stolidly, continuously. Only after the day's work, perhaps after several days' work, does he see what he has done. Then he examines the riffles over which the water and the gravel have been flowing, and there he finds a few grains of gold which reward his labor, selected not by his own personal care, but by that very force to which he intrusts it.

That is the only way any man can work, working with a certain carelessness of effort, but working on because he intrusts what he does to some great constant power which is all the time selecting the thing that is good and finding in that good something permanent, while the rest goes for naught. A man has not yet learned to live in the world who has not learned to trust some such selective power, to look on without regret while much that for the moment seemed of worth

becomes a thing of naught and is forgotten. Then, when the day's work is over, that which is worth preserving is preserved. He trusts himself to the eternal power with which he works. And it is altogether false and misleading when yesterday's sifted gold is compared with the gravel of to-day, yesterday's achievement with the imperfectness of to-day's effort.

The only thing, after all, that we learn from experience, the only thing that we can hand down at last to those who come after, is the sense of value. We tell our children it is only the gold that makes the labor worth while, that it is only the excellent thing that is permanent, and we can make them seek that excellent thing and find their satisfaction in it. This sense of values, intellectual and spiritual, which we acquire, comes from the working of laws that are beyond our will. We speak of certain events which are memorable, that stand out for-

ever in human history and, indeed, make all the history that we remember. They were not necessarily the things most striking at the time,— these things that are *memorable.* We forget the sordidness, the futility, the absurdities of the time, the little men who in their own generation passed for great. These men pass into oblivion. They did nothing which the next generation can remember. Here and there names abide, becoming more great, looming in more heroic proportions as the ages pass. They are the names which the world cannot forget,— cannot forget because they are linked eternally with great ideals and aspirations. They become a vital part of the heritage of mankind, not because some past day was holier than this or some other age really braver than this, but only because the brave men and brave deeds are remembered, and the time-servers are forgotten.

We say that it takes time for causes and tendencies to become clear, so that we

can see the great moral principle behind them, that we in our day are confused, we have no clear compelling motive, no call for manliness and for sacrifices. Was there ever a time when it was not so? Was there ever a time when common men were not tempted to think that gain is godliness, ever a time when the pettiness of the day did not tend to hide the clear shining of eternal truth? But at all times there were some who did remain loyal, loyal to their own ideals. There were always some who chose the unpopular cause because it seemed to them true. And then the days pass, the transitory things fade away, and these causes and these souls that had been in "the way everlasting" stand out clear and strong as wisdom is justified of her children.

If we could but see this simple law of nature, if we could but believe in that eternal justice through which that which is real abides and that which is the nature of pretence vanishes, our lives would be

simplified. Then should we look at the new question not as something that disturbs the old order, but as a part of that order. Always the souls that have sought God have found him according to the measure of their seeking. Always through the earnest desire has come such achievement as the world has known. The question of old and new, of the tried and the untried, does not enter in. Every loyal obedience to the inner call of duty, every attempt at speaking bravely the thing that is within one's own heart, every attempt to utter kindness and good will, brings us into connection with the whole history of the upward movement of the world. So have good men and women been doing from the beginning, and all our heritage is but the result of their effort. If to us there comes the need of meeting a new situation, speaking in the new accent, making for the time a new emphasis, we are simply following out that universal law through which the world grows more and more,

though men die and fail. A new commandment speaks to us. When we obey it, we find that it is the old commandment which we have heard from the beginning.

One who thus faces life has no fear of putting forth to the full all the power that is in him. The great mistake of the world has never come through too much effort, through too great ideals. The world takes care of itself. The world cannot be moved by mere wilfulness; and that which belongs to our wilfulness, to our mistakes, we may leave to that kindly oblivion which covers all such things in the end. These are the things which are to come to naught and all the love of truth, of the sincere desire, all the generous ardor mingled with them,— all these things remain because they are of God.

III

Symbols

SYMBOLS

In both the school and the church a great part of the teaching is by use of symbols. The real subjects are too vast and complex to be directly presented, so that representative forms are used instead. The real earth cannot be brought into the school-room, but its shape can be shown by the little globe. The "object-lesson" is indispensable.

In like manner the great truths of religion are so involved in the whole of human life that they cannot, in their entirety, be brought within the limits of the church. Only certain aspects of them can be exhibited, and that through some symbolical representation. Symbolism is not an invention of priests: it is rather an educational device. It has a psychological justification. Thought and feeling must be

helped by concrete examples, and the example must lend itself to the teacher's purpose. The form and the spirit must be united if a permanent impression is to be made.

When one for the first time goes into a Catholic church at high mass, he may be readily excused if he looks upon the whole ceremony as mere mummery. The unknown language, the phrases repeated again and again and as though they had some magic efficacy, the genuflections of the priest and the people, seem meaningless to one who has been accustomed to a simpler form of worship. Yet, though these ceremonies may be meaningless to the unprepared spectator, it does not follow that they are meaningless to those accustomed to them. To the worshipper there these are not dead, empty forms. They are full of spiritual passion. The worshipper seems to stand before the central scene in the world's history.

He stands again looking at the scene on Calvary, he sees the "Lamb of God" still "taking away the sins of the world." To call all this mummery is only a confession of our own ignorance and lack of imagination. It indicates the same state of mind that would make one call a foreign language mere jargon. Before we criticise the thing, we must try to understand it. Because *we* find no meaning in it, there is no reason that we should say that there is no meaning there.

Now, when we see an elaborate ritual like this, we perceive clearly that all these actions and words are symbolic. The words and scenes are nothing in themselves, they do not profess to be anything in themselves; but they stand for and represent something which is believed to be true. Here is a kind of language which is supposed to be understood by the people: the church is here speaking to her children in parables. Through the gate-ways of the senses and the imagina-

tion, she is seeking to enter their inmost souls. These outward things are not the grace which is beyond price: they are only the means of grace,— not the fountains of religion, but the well worn channels of religious emotion. And so the Church makes use of every possible means for bringing her thought and her holy passion to bear upon the heart and upon the conscience. Architecture, music, motion, speech, color, are used in turn and are subordinated to one purpose, which is to arouse and direct thought and feeling in regard to religion.

Now a true criticism of any such elaborate religion is the same that may be used in regard to language. The first essential of language is not that it should be rich or beautiful, though it may be both: the first essential is that it should have a meaning, and that it should actually convey that meaning. And so one asks, Do people actually understand these acts and symbols? And the candid priest would

be very willing to acknowledge that as a matter of fact a great many people do not understand them. He may admit that there are in his congregation those who look upon these signs, not as symbols at all, but as the ultimate reality. They see and hear, and after a fashion enjoy, the sights and sounds, but they go no farther. These forms are not transparent to their thought. They stand to them with a certain opaque virtue of their own. The place is holy, the image is the object of worship. All these things that the church has provided with such profusion are accepted as realities and enjoyed and reverenced as such. They are not to these persons the "shadow and copy of heavenly things," full of holy suggestions of something beyond: they are the holy things themselves. And yet the priest might say that this is not his fault or the fault of the service, but that the fault is with those who are so dull of understanding that they cannot interpret the symbol into reality.

The Understanding Heart

Many people do not understand parables, or poetry, or any symbolic statement of truth; but the man of logic who thinks he has a statement so crystal clear that it contains the truth and nothing but the truth cannot glory, because the priest may very well ask him, "Do all the people understand what you mean when you speak through the colorless understanding, do they as a matter of fact get the holy passion for righteousness and for truth which is yours?"

Shakespeare makes his curate and schoolmaster discourse together, while Goodman Dull stands by and listens. After a while they say to Goodman Dull, "Thou hast spoken no word all this while," and Goodman Dull answers after his kind, "No, nor understood none neither, sir."

Goodman Dull may not understand poetry, forms, the sense of any priestly ritual; but Goodman Dull is not a ready pupil in logic, either. He must in any

event be taught "line upon line, precept upon precept."

Now, when we have this elaborate ritual, we see that there are two things,—the symbol and the great reality which is behind it. A symbol is nothing of itself, but it is the means of communicating something of true value. Every religion, no matter how simple, no matter how natural, must be in its methods largely ritualistic. Because it deals with that which is infinite and eternal, it cannot dispense with some outward forms by which these things are made known. It must be propagated not by means of exact definitions, not by showing the things themselves, but only by suggesting them. Every religion must use these symbols, whether elaborate or simple, to suggest something behind; and the most simple and rational religion is most in danger of degenerating into formalism, because it is then so easy to mistake the form for the reality.

The Understanding Heart

The Quaker is more apt to be a formalist than the priest, because he does not readily see that his simple actions or mere silence are not in themselves worth anything, but are only suggestions of something which the soul may reach through them. Let us take the most spiritual and inward views of religion, let us say once for all that it is not a thing of formality, but of life and of the interior apprehension, it is the direct sense of the infinite and the eternal in the individual soul, its joy and peace and hope. When you have felt any of these things in your own heart, the desire comes to communicate them to others. Something very wonderful has happened to you, life has become altogether different, a great hope has dawned, a mighty emotion has come to you: you stand in the presence of infinite reality which demands the allegiance of your heart and life. And it is then when something has happened to you which transcends your knowledge that you be-

come conscious of the loneliness of every individual soul, the great gulf that separates you from others. Then you begin to ask yourself, Has this holy secret been revealed to me alone, has another felt just this which thrills me? Has this hope dawned upon another soul and this love taken possession of it? How can you know?

It is only when some one, by use of some form, communicates with you that you can know whether your deepest life is something that separates you from others or unites you in a common fellowship. We are all upon the great deep: every soul is a ship sailing upon its own predestined course, but across the great deep we can signal to each other. The whole history of religion in its outward manifestation is this. It is the attempt of individual souls to communicate with each other across the gulf of life, telling of the discoveries they have made, signalling across great centuries and lands until they learn at last that the

heart of the world is one in its needs and its hopes.

Now, as the ship-master, when he sees the signals from afar, must compare those signals with his own code, so every one of us who sees the signs must interpret them as best we may, through our own personal experience, until we come to see that as we feel to-day others have felt. And we find, when these signals come, that we must take the common things of life as the basis, we must use them as suggestions of the higher things. So nature comes to be all symbolic to the religious consciousness.

The mountain thus becomes to every idealist something more than a heap of earth and stone: it becomes "the great affirmer of the present tense and type of permanence."

And the sea with its restlessness is something more than the water which is in it, for there are tides of the spirit which

respond in us to the movement of the sea. It becomes truly to every one of us looking upon it typical of those hopes which make our life, and the mystery of it.

When one across the centuries is telling us of the thought that came to him as he looked out upon the universe,—"Thy righteousness is like a great mountain, Thy judgments like a great sea,—" we need no scholar to interpret the words. We also have felt the presence of the same mystery. And the light that comes to us is not merely a physical thing any longer: it thrills us with messages of hope. We know what the man meant who said of God, "God is light;" the words interpret these signals that flash round the world.

To the lover of light, darkness is something more than a physical fact. Why is it to-day that the philanthropist looks upon the dark cell of the prison as in itself a torture too great to be inflicted?

Because only that soul which is illumined from within, which finds some spiritual light, dares face continually the darkness. To the sinful soul the darkness stands as the withdrawal of all hope. No man thus facing his own life can have those symbols always before him without despair. The light and the darkness, day and night,— these stand for experiences of the inner life.

We must teach by symbols. This we must all acknowledge. A form of thought or a form of words is just as truly symbolic as is a gesture or a statue. But the educational question is: Do these symbols actually lift the soul to the contemplation of the truth symbolized? Does the parable illuminate any otherwise dark tract of experience?

George Eliot tells of the clergyman who, in an elaborate discourse on the parable of the leaven, was successful in getting the hearers' minds into the dough-tub, but was unable to get them out.

Such is the result of all unskilful efforts at religious teaching.

Here the church may learn a lesson from the school. The object-lesson is in the school-room used as a means to an end, it never allowed to become an end in itself. It gives only one aspect of the reality: the teacher aims to draw the mind away from it to the thing for which it stands. When this is once clearly understood and practised in the church, there will be no further quarrel with symbolism. Let the teacher of religion have his mind centred on a reality, then all his chosen symbols will become transparent.

IV

Literature and Morals

LITERATURE AND MORALS

"WHAT books shall we put into the hands of our children?" This question is asked with a tremulous anxiety by those who have moral and spiritual interests at heart.

A list of the best books, from the standpoint of the lover of literature, only adds to the anxiety; for it happens that these books have not all been written with the purpose of edification. Literary culture is something different from "the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

It has been characteristic of evangelical piety that it has been distrustful of the world's great literature, and has attempted to create a literature of its own. The drama, the novel, the poetry which expressed the feelings of the natural man; all these were classed among the temp-

tations. The youth in a sheltered home was given "safe" books to read. If fiction was allowed, it was of a kind so much less strange than truth that it did not stimulate the imagination. In these tales the heroes suffered for a time, but always according to an intelligible plan and for the sake of an obvious moral. They had their temptations, but they were not of a kind to tempt the reader. If there was the slightest danger of misapprehension, the good author would intervene, like Snug, the joiner, to give assurance that no harm was meant. The path of duty was well supplied with guide-boards and policemen. The distinctions between virtue and vice were never left unexplained. The sinner was never allowed to deviate for an instant into rectitude, nor to endear himself by any lapses into virtue inconsistent with his main character. He was introduced only to illustrate the "exceeding sinfulness of sin." The hypocrite could be detected at a glance: the wolves wore

their sheep's clothing so awkwardly that not even the most inexperienced lamb could be deceived. One did not think of the characters as changing from day to day under stress of circumstance, becoming now weaker, now stronger. A great gulf divided the good from the bad. The bad were predestinated by the author from the beginning unto wrath. This decree of literary reprobation was as unyielding as that described by the Westminster divines: "Some men and angels are predestinated and foreordained unto everlasting death. These men and angels, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

Not only works of pious fiction have been written in this way, but histories have been written, not primarily to satisfy the desire to trace the course of events, but to illustrate a thesis. They show not

so much what happened as what, in the writer's opinion, ought to have happened. We are shown how the wicked are caught in their own devices, and how the righteous inherit the earth. The retribution on evil deeds is pictured as so direct that one wonders how evil has managed to survive. An agreeable feature in such histories, and one which saves the reader from perplexity, is that the righteous always belong to the same sect and fight under the same banner. There is none of the difficulty presented in the parable, where the wheat and the tares grow up together and are often indistinguishable; for they are shown to belong to different fields and to be always divided by a sufficient fence.

There have been systems of philosophy in which only what is presumed to be "safe" has been allowed place. It is an expurgated edition of the universe that is presented, adapted for the use of parish schools. These neat systems seem de-

signed to disprove the saying that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing"; the amount of knowledge of the real world contained in them being so very little that it could scarcely be dangerous to the weakest intelligence. No facts are admitted that do not fit snugly into the edifying system. Nature has no teeth or claws. There are no ugly facts, no untamed passions, no unanswered questions, no tantalizing possibilities, no vast dim regions yet unexplored. The universe presented is just the kind of a universe which a well-regulated but somewhat commonplace intelligence would have created. The most that can be said against it is that it is a little dull.

It is a critical moment when one discovers that this is not the real universe, which is something not nearly so safe, and a great deal bigger. The real universe is so big that it is easy to get lost in it; and all of us do get lost in it, and the wisest only dimly see the way. And

we learn that human nature is much more complex than we had been taught, and character and circumstance are not adjusted with that mechanical exactitude which the moral tale describes. Real people are neither so good nor so bad as the people in an allegory.

When we turn from the books that are written for edification to the real literature of life, we enter a new world. The great poets, philosophers, historians, dramatists, novelists, are not special pleaders for any single type of character, nor do they set up any one standard of respectability. They try to understand the truth and to sympathetically express it. Through the exercise of reason and imagination, they desire to give a representation of many-sided realities.

The historian who conscientiously attempts to trace the actual course of events finds that the channel which the stream has made for itself is less straight than that which the moralist had traced for it.

There are many devious windings and many surprises to the explorer. There are many great events whose moral bearings are not obvious. There is a seamy side to the lives of the saints. There are great men, to whom the world is indebted, whose characters do not match their deeds. Many a good cause has triumphed by questionable means. In like manner the philosopher finds many facts that sadly mar the symmetry of his system. He must confess that they are true, and yet he doesn't know just what to do with them.

The great dramatists and novelists imitate the wide impartiality of nature. The sun of genius shines alike on the just and the unjust. All varieties of character, all circumstances, all passions and struggles, are sympathetically studied, with the desire to find out the truth in regard to them. There are no labels to the characters, no predetermined plan by which rewards and punishments are meted out. The people

live their lives, working out each one his own destiny. They act from mixed motives and from imperfect knowledge. They are subject to accidents which mar the smooth administration of poetical justice. The author does not apologize because his picture does not always seem edifying: it is sufficient if it enlarges our conception of reality.

Men of intense moral earnestness have always found it hard to appreciate this point of view. It is a part of the old conflict between the Puritan and the Humanist. The Puritan was intent on the discipline of conscience and the purification of the spiritual nature. The Humanist sought the enlargement of experience and the increase of sensibility. The Puritan sought to reform the world, the Humanist to understand it and appreciate it.

But is there not a generous culture that unites these two ideals and seeks to cultivate them in harmony? Should not our effort be to such an end? This was the

ideal realized by Milton in the seventeenth century and by Channing in the nineteenth.

Milton's conception of virtue was inclusive of wide sympathy and generous human aspiration: —

> "Mortals that would follow me,
> Love Virtue: she alone is free,
> She can teach you how to climb
> Higher than the sphery chime,
> Or, if Virtue feeble were,
> Heaven itself would stoop to her."

Conceive of religion and morality not as conventionalities to be preserved, but as mighty forces exhibited in the living world, and we come to see in all great literature an inspiration.

There are clever persons who tell us that the great writers are *unmoral.* Morality is treated by them as a provincialism that may be ignored by the man of cosmopolitan breadth. It is a prejudice

of commonplace minds. It is, in their judgment, the highest praise of a work of art that it has no moral quality.

Now, if this were so, if the greatest works of human genius were unmoral, and if it were the necessary effect of intellectual culture to produce indifference to right and wrong, I should, I confess, go with the Puritan. We can get along, he says, without great art or literature, but we cannot get along without honest and earnest men and women. We can get along without taste or scholarship: we cannot get along without character. We can get along without very extensive knowledge of the great world; but so much of the world as we live in and control we must make clean and habitable. Some one has described the man of unmoral culture, with his half-sceptical interest in social problems, as "a Sadducee asking his way to Utopia." Rather than such a man, give me the Puritan ideal of the pilgrim "clothed with rags, standing

with his face from his own house, a book in his hand and a great burden on his back, and crying, What shall I do to be saved?" Cardinal Newman was right when he declared,—

> "Dim is the philosophic flame,
> By thoughts severe unfed;
> Book-lore ne'er served when trial came,
> Nor gifts when faith is dead."

But in what sense are the great works of human genius, those works which give the largest and freest representations of reality, unmoral? If you mean that the first intention of their authors is not to point a moral, or if you mean that they pay little attention to the conventional standards of respectability, and that they are not afraid to shock the prejudices of many good people, all this may be readily granted. But if you mean that a complete and truthful representation of human life can be given which ignores

moral powers and moral relations, I say, no.

The great facts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, cannot be suppressed. Those who eliminate them from their picture only indicate their own limitations, and condemn their work to hopeless triviality. He who without moral insight attempts to tell the story of an individual or a nation, is like a painter who is color-blind. It is not as if the moral were tacked on to the story; it is involved in the story itself, it is the centre of its interest. How men sin, and suffer from their sins, and at last, through sorrow and pain, find the way of life,—what greater theme is there than this? One might say that this is the only theme, and that literature furnishes only variations upon it. Did we live in a perfect world, in which no mistakes were possible, and no struggles were required, there would be nothing to tell. This monotony of excellence would furnish no material for history. And, on

the other hand, were there no ideal of perfection, nothing to rebuke us in our lowness and to lure us on to an excellence yet unattained, there would be nothing worth telling. It is because we are imperfect creatures, capable of worshipping the perfect and striving for it, that life becomes thrilling in its significance. How, under all varieties of circumstances, souls are awakened to their true condition, how they make mistakes, how they learn wisdom from their errors, how they sorrow and love and aspire, how danger evokes heroism, and disappointment hope,—of all this we never tire. Shakespeare describes this perennial theme of literary art,—

"O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And ruined love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater."

The "benefit of ill" is essentially a moral theme; it is a discovery of the moral in-

sight; it involves the triumph of the soul over unfavorable circumstances.

The term "unmoral" may properly be applied to clever rather than to great literature. A short story may be written from which all ethical elements are left out. In such a story we are shown an act without its consequences. A person commits a pleasant sin, and we see its pleasantness and not its sinfulness. There is an impression of delightful irresponsibility. But this impression comes, not because we have an artistic representation of the truth, but because the whole truth has not been told. Poets have written beautiful songs in praise of wine, and have described the exhilaration and gladness that belong to certain stages of intoxication. But no poet could describe it all, so as to make it seem attractive. Vice ceases to be attractive when it is seen in all its results and relations. Those who have attempted great things, who have tried to portray life in its wholeness, have found it impos-

sible to ignore the moral element. If it does not appear directly, it manifests itself powerfully by suggestion. In the real world every act has its consequence, and it is the business of the student of humanity to trace the consequences. The judgment on the evil deed may not be so obvious as in the moral tale; but it is a real judgment, coming through the working of natural law. This is what gives significance to the great tragedies. We trace in them both physical and moral causation, but the great interest is always in the latter element. What matter if the hero is borne down by overwhelming physical force? If he is faithful unto death, and in death is heroic, we hail him as conqueror.

Nor is great literature unmoral because it introduces us to other than what we call respectable people. If that were so, the New Testament would be lacking in morality, because of its sympathetic treatment of harlots and publicans and sinners.

This means only a more truly discriminating moral judgment. The line between right and wrong does not run between different classes in the community. "The word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The judgment of those who are quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart will be different from that of those who judge by some conventional standard. They will point out the weaknesses and selfishness in many whom the world praises, and they will find much to love among people who are despised and blamed. This means that they have discovered that the moral struggle is not all in one place, and going on only under certain circumstances. The battlefield is the world, and the battle is along the whole line. Wherever a man sees a better and

a worse, and chooses the worse, there is sin and wretchedness. Wherever a man chooses the better part, there is a triumph for righteousness. To truly observe and rightly record the varying phases of this great human struggle requires, not the spirit of a narrow partisan, but the broadest sympathy and the quickest apprehension.

Nor is the philosophic attitude toward the world unmoral, though it often seems so to the impatient moralist. Broad tolerance and impartial acceptance of facts gives the impression of ethical indifference. But in reality this is but the condition of true moral judgment. No more impressive words are found in the Bible than those which describe the impartial eyes of God without anger, but with full comprehension of the actual and the possible, viewing the evil and the good in human character. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." That seems to me

more impressive than any description of a general judgment. We live our lives, we do our deeds, we achieve our measure of success. But all the time there is an intelligence that sees us as we are. In the light of this intelligence our good, however imperfect in its expression, is seen to be good, our evil, however disguised, is seen to be evil. And is not this what the human intelligence, when it has grown large and clear and calm, becomes? The ideal philosopher — not the system-maker, but the man of serene wisdom — does not wilfully shut his eyes to any reality. His eyes are in every place: he seeks to comprehend, and is not quick to blame. But, when he sees the evil and the good, they are not alike to him. The same clear-sightedness which discerns a character must also discern its quality and its value.

Between a narrow morality and a selfish culture there must be conflict. But there is a morality that is not nar-

row, and a culture that is not selfish. To know the real world, to feel the sweep of its great forces, to enjoy its amazing variety, is not to have escaped from the realm of moral law. It is only to have prepared one's self for its understanding. The education which fits us to perceive the actual world must also fit us to do our proper part in it.

V

Work and Worship

WORK AND WORSHIP

In the discussions which we so often hear in regard to the future of religion, there is one thought which is continually repeated and which brings to many minds great apprehension. It is that religion is in danger from the increasing preoccupation of the minds of the people. It may be disputed whether the rich are growing richer and the poor growing poorer, but it is certainly true that the busy are growing busier and the idle are more preoccupied by the pleasures of idleness. The modern man finds so much to do. There are so many directions in which his mind may move, so much work, so much possibility of pleasure to be crowded into the few years of his life, that there are those who say it is possible that through this very expansion of human activity religion

may be crowded out. Even as it is to-day, they say, it is too much to expect that the men who are building our cities and our railroads, who are discovering the laws of the universe, who are troubled with the problems of government, who have charge of vast business affairs, should have time for the peculiar problems of religion. Men are becoming too busy to be religious.

Now I think that the very fact that such an idea ever enters into the minds of men is an indication that our ordinary idea of what religion is is an inadequate one. What would you say of an officer in the army who should declare: "I am too busy to indulge in patriotic feeling or to respond to that. I am too much occupied with many affairs that demand my whole attention. I have to see that my men are well drilled and well fed; I have to go upon the march, I have to be prepared for battle. I am too busy to indulge in any transcendental sentiment."

What would you say to that man? You would say: "You mistake altogether the meaning of patriotism. It is not another kind of business that you are to perform after you are through with this necessary work of your profession. It is simply that which gives your profession any value whatever. Without this sentiment your business is the vilest that can be conceived. You are a mere mercenary engaged in the trade of butchery. There is a sentiment which justifies you, however, which lifts your profession from the lowest to the highest; and that is the love of the country, unselfish devotion to the flag you serve. It isn't a question of time, it isn't a question of preoccupation: it is a question of right feeling."

Lovers of peace often make the mistake of underrating the idea of military honor, and of speaking slightingly of the soldier's profession. As a matter of fact, we have to speak in a different tone if we are to preserve our own liberty. No

man is worthy to hold the sword save as he is inspired by the very highest motives. And all that inspires military honor,— the religious sentiment, if you will, of the military life,— all that is a necessary part of that life, without which it has no value whatever, or is worse than that,— is a menace to the public weal.

What would you say to the man of business who said to you: "I have to do a great many things, I have to make plans for this business of mine, I have to see that my obligations are met, that the work given me to do is done correctly. I have a great many things to look after. I have so much to do that I have no time to consider my duty, no time to consider questions of ethics. I am a practical man of affairs"? What would you say to the wife and mother who declared; "My household demands all my care. I am occupied with the welfare of my children and my husband. I have no time to indulge in what you call love.

That is an affair altogether apart from the necessary work of my life. I am too much preoccupied for that"?

Now in a thoroughly wholesome and natural state, religion bears just that relation to life. It is not something which is an affair by itself, something that can be considered in any abstract way, but something which gives the very highest value to every activity. A man should not think of religion as if it were another thing from that which he is all the time doing.

Suppose you had gone to a grave citizen of the Roman Republic and asked him about his religion. I fancy that such a man would hardly know what you meant. He would not approach it as we in these days are apt to approach a religious question. "Have you time for religion?" you would ask that man, the man who bore the burdens of state, who was the counsellor, the legislator, the soldier of the Republic. He would say

that he had military offices to perform and he had to summon a certain kind of strength within himself that enabled him to perform those duties. He needed fortitude, and because of that he sacrificed at the altar of Fortitude. He went to the war, and he came back with his trophies to the temple of Victory. Victory was not to him a merely human achievement: it was won through co-operation with the heavenly powers. He had to live, to fight, to legislate, to administer government. Each act of this Roman citizen was accompanied by a certain religious sentiment which lifted it into dignity. That was what gave glory and meaning to his life. One of the highest officers of his religion and of the state he called the Pontifex, the bridge-builder. The title carried his mind back to the time when to build a bridge across the Tiber was a sacred act. The bridge-builder was a sacred officer. Except the bridge were built truly, except it were built in accord-

ance with the highest laws, they labored in vain that built it. All these men were religious men, with religious functions and possibilities. Could a man be a loyal citizen of the Republic without sharing in the supreme ideals of the Republic? How could a man expect the laws to be observed save as in some way he felt the law itself to be sacred? To be a profane man was to be a traitor. So the Roman talked of piety not as something that was apart from family life and from duty to the state. A man of piety was the man who loved father and mother and reverenced the laws that came through them as well as one who had the same sentiments towards the gods who were unseen.

In the modern world we sometimes lose this thought of the religious significance of the whole life. We are accustomed to the distinction between the secular and the ecclesiastical. Religion has been made a profession, and treated as if it might have an independent life of its

own. The confusion has become greater because secular methods have been continually improving while ecclesiastical methods have been less subject to change.

One of the first men to see that what is needed is not merely a theological reconstruction, but a new outlook upon human life, was William Ellery Channing. He saw clearly that religion must be interpreted not by ecclesiastics, but by broad-minded men of the world. It must claim for its own the whole field of human activity.

Speaking at the dedication of the Cambridge Divinity School, he protested against that "piety that, like the upas-tree, makes a desert where it grows." He lamented that ministers have so fallen behind their age that they are often the most determined foes to progress. "The young man who cannot conceive of higher effects of the ministry than he now beholds, who thinks that Christianity has spent all its energies in producing the

mediocrity of virtue that at present characterizes Christendom, has no call to the ministry." "Why is the future ministry to be a servile imitation of the past? If we live in a new era, must not religion be exhibited in new aspects and in new relations?" Channing touched upon the real weakness of our modern religion when he said: "Religion has been made a separate business, and a dull, unsocial, melancholy business, too, instead of being manifested as a truth that touches everything human, as a universal spirit which ought to breathe through and modify all our desires and activities, all our trains of thought and emotion. . . . Instead of regarding it as a heavenly institution, designed to perfect our whole nature, to offer awakening and purifying objects to the intellect, imagination, and heart, to develop every capacity of devout and generous feeling, to form a rich, various, generous virtue, divines have cramped and tortured the gospel into various sys-

tems, composed in the main of theological riddles and contradictions."

We have only begun to think of religion as the development, here in this world, of a "rich, various, and generous virtue." We have been accustomed to think of it as only one kind of virtue to be approached only in one way, as if men of one profession had the monopoly of God. The real religion which is adequate for modern life can never be developed by churchmen alone: it cannot exist save as we get large numbers of people together and make each person feel that he himself is making a religion; that he is bringing to the church and to the world that which the church and the world need, — his individual insight into truth, his ideal of perfection, his moral and spiritual enthusiasm. We have to come back to just that kind of feeling which made the Roman bridge-builder a sacred person.

Now that is a great deal to do. We have only begun to think that it is worth

doing or that it is possible. When we come to feel the sacred significance of life, we shall answer the question whether it is possible that men may be too busy and too much burdened to be religious. Then we shall see that the more work a man has to do, the more power he must have behind him. And we shall see that something more than physical strength is needed. We must use spiritual powers to enable us to do our simple duty. At the very highest, the life of a true man of business becomes the expression of religion. At the very highest, the real poet cannot be anything but religious. At the very highest, the statesman feels himself to be an instrument in the hands of God. The philosopher sees that he is only thinking God's thoughts after him. How rich, how various, how wonderful are these experiences! And the time has come for us to recognize that these form the very essence of religion.

Suppose one were to preach on Sunday

with sufficient power to make every one go forth for the next week and do something which the preacher conceives to be the one service of God. I can imagine that possible. "We will forsake our secular, every-day business," you say, "and give ourselves for a whole week to what this man says is God's business." How much poorer the community would be, how much poorer this nation would be for that, because one man could tell so much less of what his neighbors could do than each one could discover for himself. Suppose, on the other hand, each person were to go forth to his own business, to his own appointed and chosen work, and should say, "For this one week I will take this business of mine as if it were a sacred office, as if God himself commanded me to do this, and to do it the very highest way possible for me." How much richer the world and the community would be for these various virtues, these gladder activities everywhere manifested!

There is a point where every man's life seems dull, sordid, and selfish. There is a way of doing his work which leaves him cold toward the world and toward the higher power. But just as the temperature of the soul rises, a change comes, and that which once seemed bare and mean and selfish seems to be one of the phases of the divine activity. That is what religion is meant to do,— to lift out of its selfishness, its sordidness, and its commonplaceness any work which any human being is called upon to do.

Suppose a young man were to give himself to a life of letters; were to say: "I am going to make poetry. It is very hard work. I must give my whole time to it"; and then he were to read the lines of Shelley: —

"The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng

Whose sails were never to the tempest given.
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of heaven
The soul of Adonais like a star
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are."

The would-be man of letters says: "That is something which I have never felt,— a breath that comes upon me with inspirations from above, some influence bearing me afar from the things of sense. That sounds very much like religion. I have no time for that. I am making poetry. I must be at work." Do you not see that that man has shut himself off from the highest possibility of his own chosen art? Only when he receives some kind of inspiration can the finest work be done, and that inspiration cannot be described save in terms of religion.

Suppose a man gives himself to some science, or to some strenuous profession,

and then reads this description of the mind in which intellectual integrity has risen to the point of religious fervor: "In the glorious company of the heroes a high rank belongs to him who, superior to frowns and sneers, and in opposition to warping influence of private friendship or personal ambition, keeps his mind chaste, inviolate, a sacred temple for truth, ever open to new light from heaven; and who, faithful to his deliberate convictions, speaks simply and firmly what his uncorrupted mind believes." Every word here is a word of religion, every symbol is a religious symbol. The ambitious man says: "I haven't time to indulge in that sort of thing. I want to accumulate facts. I want to write books. I want to make theories. I want to pass judgment on the affairs of state. I have a thousand things to do and I haven't time for sentiment."

Well, if you haven't time for that, you cannot do what vou aspire to do. If

your mind is only a workshop and you are only a workman, if there is no sacred place kept inviolate from passion, from prejudice, from self-interest, then all your judgments are warped and biassed. We cannot trust such a man as a judge upon the bench. We should not trust such a man to give judgment in affairs where great interests were concerned, which involve the life of nations, because he has not yet that inviolate mind sacred to truth. There must be a sacred place somewhere. There must be something corresponding to worship. There must be ideal aspirations somewhere, and, when you come to such ideals, you come to the attitude of religion.

We go about our daily work doing the thing we have to do and doing it as well as we can; then we come together with common faith, common aspiration, with recognition of the underlying meaning of it all, hoping that upon us the breath divine may come, so that all the drudgery

may be transformed into worship, faith, and joy. We are builders, building the institutions of society, building our individual homes and our individual business. And, as we build, we realize that we may not indulge in whims of our own; that there are certain great laws of the universe that must be obeyed, and these are spiritual laws. These laws involve righteousness. When we build in defiance of them, our structures fall of their own weight. Except the Lord be with us, except we are with Him, we labor in vain. We cannot draw a line of division between our work and our worship; but we must realize that our work is not done well unless the spirit of worship has been in it all.

The need of religion to the man of affairs is greater than it ever was before; for there are certain aspects of his work that terrify him. Primitive tools, which the man could use, have given place to elaborate machinery. Shall the man use the machinery for his own purpose, to

nurture his real life, to aid in his own development, or shall the machine gain the mastery and crush him? Everywhere the machine is setting the pace.

When Coleridge and Wordsworth were walking through Scotland, they came upon a steam-engine. Wordsworth said that it seemed to him like a living creature. "Yes," said Coleridge, "it is a giant with one idea."

That is the terrible thing about a machine-made civilization. The machine is great and strong, it is marvellous in its capacity for work; but no machine, however intricate, can express more than one idea. The idea may be a narrow one and fatal to human happiness; but what of it? The machine moves on, incapable of pity or remorse. The improved cotton-mill will turn out more cotton cloth, the railway with heavier rails and larger locomotives will transport more goods at a lower cost, the printing-press will turn out more newspapers and books.

All this is progress. But what of happiness and justice, what of love and peace? There is no machinery by which these things are manufactured.

In an age when the giant with one idea threatens to become the master, a spiritual religion appears as a new chivalry. In transforming work into worship, it elevates the man above all the machinery he has invented.

VI

The Higher Intelligence

THE HIGHER INTELLIGENCE

One great source of confusion in religious education arises out of our exaggeration of the distinction between intellectual and moral development. We delight in emphasizing the contrast between goodness and wisdom. We treat them as if they belonged to unrelated spheres. When we praise a man for one set of qualities, we often imply disparagement in regard to the others. The good man, we say, is loving, tender-hearted, sympathetic, just. The wise man seeks reality. He is keen, inquisitive, sceptical. He seeks to know the thing as it is. In our ordinary thought we place the two characters in opposition.

The wise man, we say, is not necessarily or often good, the good man not often wise. When we have any very

important business which requires intellectual acuteness, we are not satisfied to go to one who is commended to us as "a good, faithful soul." We take it for granted that his moral qualities are praised because nothing can be said of his intellectual qualifications.

This antithesis with certain minds becomes more pronounced. The essence of what we call pessimism lies in this,—that goodness and wisdom are conceived not only as different things, but as in their nature irreconcilable. They belong to two different compartments, and so long as they are kept apart all is well. When they are brought together, and the wise man seeks to be good and the good man seeks to be wise, then there is disaster. The pessimist is a pessimist because on the one side he has a sensitive conscience, and on the other an acute intelligence. It is in the attempt to bring these two things together that he comes to rebellion against the actual world.

This was the sting in the words of the Fury in Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound": —

"The good want power, but to weep barren tears,
The powerful goodness want; worse need for them.
The wise want love, and those who love want wisdom;
And all best things are thus confused to ill."

If to be wise is to come to the understanding of an altogether unmoral universe, then for the wise to attempt also to be good must result only in hopeless misery. According to this view the young man beginning his career may choose between the two ideals. He may say, I choose goodness. Very well, shut your eyes to facts. Be not too inquisitive to explore the dark places of this world. Close your ears to many of the voices that come to you. Walk in one narrow path with bowed head, as did the

saints of old. Mortify not only body, but mind as well. Go on, and you shall go, step by step, up your Calvary, that Mount of Sorrow that belongs to all who would be over-much righteous in an indifferent world. Dream your dream, see your vision; may the time never come when you shall awake! The wise man looks upon you as he looks upon some one under the influence of an opiate; who does not know the truth and whose senses are lulled to the hard reality, and who amid the charnels of the dead hears the murmur of the fountain-head. A good man who dreams his dream of righteousness, who thinks he was not made to die, does not hear the fiend voices that rage about him. That is the utmost that a man from this standpoint can say to those who are trying to live a life of ideal rectitude in a world where they say ideal rectitude brings only hopeless misery and disappointment.

On the other hand, one may choose

the path of knowledge. To him the advice is: Beware of all emotion. The intellect must be kept cool, indifferent to the moral struggle. Do not allow any thought of hero-worship to intrude in your mind, else you cannot see human life as it is. Do not allow yourself to be carried away by thought of any final causes, of any dramatic movement of the world, of any great cloud of witnesses looking down upon this little planet of ours as upon a wondrous spectacle. See the thing as it is, and only as it is. Let your intellect expand at the expense of your emotions, which are only misleading. To know the truth is to stand as one indifferent to love and hope and pity. So at last do you become wise. When you become wise, you become miserable. Your life is behind you. Your mind is full of sad experiences. At last you are so wise that you are ready to accept the fact that there is no reasonable outcome whatever, no adequate explanation for all

this struggle of humanity. The good man, simple-hearted, dull of perception, strong of faith, let him go his way and dream his dream. The wise man, brave but hopeless, let him gather for himself the experience which only brings to him the greater despair.

Now that is the result whenever we carry out, logically, the idea that goodness and wisdom are antagonistic principles; that they have nothing to do, the one with the other. The only escape that I can see is by leaving this antithesis behind us as a false and unreal one, and coming rather to that which we find in the New Testament, between "the wisdom that is from above" and that which is from below. The contrast here is not between a weak goodness and a clear intelligence; not even between the moral culture and the intellectual culture. It is between two kinds of intelligence,— what this writer describes as the lower intelligence, the lower wisdom, and what, on

the other hand, he calls the higher wisdom. The lower wisdom, he says, is earthly, sensual; or, literally, animal. It is something that is our earthly inheritance; that which links us to the creatures below. The other kind of intelligence is that which links us to God.

It is "first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, without partiality, without hypocrisy."

You will note that he has not here treated of what he calls morality, but what he calls intellect. This is the kind of wisdom that is characteristic of the truly developed man. Let us see how this is. We do have our line of inheritance that links us with what is earthly and what is animal. The animal intelligence has one object. It is to sustain the animal life in its struggle for existence. The brain is developed just as the claw is developed, that the animal may secure its prey. The animal that survives and that triumphs is the one that has this

intelligence in the largest degree. And it is possible to treat a man in this same fashion; possible to view the history of human civilization from this standpoint, — the standpoint of the beast of prey. The brain of one man is more finely organized than another. The man is crafty, subtle, cunning, far-seeing, and all for the sake of himself, that he may gain the mastery over others. He is developed for the same purpose that the tiger is developed in all his fearful strength. It is possible to trace this line of animal development, step by step, to the stronger race. It is possible to show how a certain spurious morality can grow out of this impulse. The wolf must conform to the law of the pack. The man must conform to the customs of his tribe, not because they are just, but only because he thus is made stronger to gain his own ends, which are substantially the same ends which the tiger or the lion had before him,— to get food, to destroy, to gratify appetite.

It is possible to carry this a step further until it bccomes a very mockery of our highest hopes. There have been those who say that religion is but the consummation of this process. The strong nations are religious because they find that religion helps them in their struggle. For one thing, it furnishes them with more prey. It makes the weak more ready to acquiesce in the tyranny of the strong, and so the strong always stand for religion,— religion for the other people more than themselves. It is the lure which draws the weak to their own destruction, and through their destruction to the greater power and glory of the few.

Now, however you refine upon this, however you try to throw a veil of sanctity over it, the stubborn fact remains that this process, through and through, has had an object which is animal, and not human. It is an object which would appeal to the intelligent tiger, not to the spiritual mind of man. When you ad-

mire this development into strength that is cruel, into power that is pitiless, you can only feel your admiration going out easily when some one of the animal kingdom is the object of it.

The finest example for us is the eagle, the sublime bird of prey, rising to the lofty heights, with eyes that pierce to the remotest distance, and which are never blurred by mist of pity or of wonder; cold, keen eyes that from those heights are looking down to a single point, and that for a single object. The eagle from the height is looking down only for its prey, and, when it finds it, then all his mighty powers are put forth.

"He clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from the mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls."

That, we say, is sublime. Yes, for the

bird of prey, that power exerted unerringly for a single object; keen, cruel eyes, strong, rushing wings, claw and beak, all united in one great power,— for what? — that that eagle may devour his prey.

But now turn to human life. Think of a man in that way. He is the result of ages and ages of growth. Every power has been developed in him slowly through the generations. At last one man rises above his fellows into the clearer air. His is the wider view. His eyes are keen. He sees afar. His strength is well knit. Then he looks down and sees some helpless creature; and with all his force brought together, with one quick swoop upon his victim, he descends, like a thunderbolt, to destroy. Is that sublime to you? Oh, that is pitiful! — beyond all imagination, pitiful! We ask, can it be that all this development has been only for that? That this man may grow strong, and because he is strong, obeying

the impulse of a narrow will, use his strength for himself alone? Is the eye of man but the eagle eye, piercing and pitiless, searching out its prey, or was it meant for the open window through which the majesty and sublimity of the universe might enter? Was the brain of man intended only to make cunning plans for selfish ends?

"Not for this
Was common clay ta'en from the common earth,
Moulded by God, and tempered with the tears of angels
To the perfect shape of man."

Not only when we look upon such a man do we feel such a revulsion, but the man himself, when he has grown in selfish strength and has put forth all his power, shrinks appalled from his own success. Never has there been such despair as among men who have gained all that they selfishly desired. Mr. Howells

has pictured such despair,— the utter discomfiture of the selfishly successful man:

"If He could doubt on His triumphant cross,
How much may I, in the defeat and loss
Of seeing all my selfish dreams fulfilled,
Of having lived the life I willed,
Of being all that I desired to be,
My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

A man forsaken when he has reached the very summit of his desire,— is he the wise man? Nay, does he not stand as a fool, self-convicted before the face of God and man? This line of selfish and sensual development leads to the time when the man stands refined, cultivated, strong, but with only the selfish, brutal impulse back of it all. This wisdom is earthly, animal, devilish, because as the fruition of it all we have before us at last only "a glorious devil, large of heart and brain."

It is when the man stands shuddering at the sight of his own success that he

asks, Is there not another kind of wisdom, another development of all our faculties; an end worthy of our power? And the answer is that there is such a wisdom. It is not the wisdom of the strong brute, cunning and insistent; it is not the wisdom of the narrow-minded savage, sly and crafty: it is the wisdom of the son of God, who recognizes God's will, and stands ready to do it. That is what his mind is for. To be freely and fully developed, not to be childishly secluded, but to do the proper work of a man.

I think we must come back again to something of the old Greek love of wisdom, as Socrates understood it; the old Hebrew love of wisdom, as we have it in the books of their sages; something of this New Testament idea of wisdom, with its development of all human faculties in grace as well as in strength. It is not a mere instrument to be used, it is a revelation of the higher purposes of existence. The man stands where he sees the end of

his life. His intelligence enables him to discover the beauty and wonder of the world; to understand something of its laws which lie below, and which control all human action; to learn the principles by which to govern himself and to develop himself. He knows that his mind was given him in order that he may learn to sympathize with other minds; to enter into their temptations and to share in their triumphs. He knows that he is here, not merely that he himself may eat and drink and get gain, but that the generations that are to come may live saner and happier lives. He sees the need of the development of will, but not the will that is obstinate, but the will that is gentle and easy to be entreated,— the good-will which brings peace on earth. It is not all to him a sombre world. There is room in it for laughter, for humor, for wit, but no place for scorn. There is need in this world for humility. When he has learned all he can learn, when he has

developed himself to his highest, he recognizes most clearly his own limitations. He stands reverently, wisely, before the mystery of being, not despairing, but believing, facing courageously that which is before him.

To understand this world, with its sorrows, with its life, with its struggles, with its temptation, with its ultimate triumph, — this, and not to satisfy the animal passions, is wisdom; and out of this wisdom, which comes when heart and brain are united in search for the divine element, comes the justification of our lives.

To such a man conscience does not stand on one side and reason on the other. It has been the glory of his life that from the beginning they have been united in one sweet reasonableness. Out of the lower intelligence comes perpetual strife. As men rise into the higher intelligence, co-operation in all good works is possible; "and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace."

VII

Moral Discipline

MORAL DISCIPLINE

How far is it really possible for any one to prepare for the great crises of life? We go on day after day in an uneventful way, with commonplace duties and simple enjoyments, and then suddenly there comes a time when the whole order of our life is overthrown. Some emergency arises demanding unusual power. The daily routine is broken up, and we are called upon to make some great choice, something which is to determine all our future life. We are called upon to bear some heavy responsibility, to answer some hard question, to endure a great loss.

Now is it possible for one, by taking thought, by any kind of discipline or foreknowledge, to prepare himself for such a time? In one sense I think it is not possible. If you mean to ask whether

we are able, by looking forward, to really answer the questions of to-morrow, to know exactly what ought to be done in some unfamiliar crisis, or to give some distinct response to a question which has not yet become urgent to us, I think we must answer that it is not possible. That which makes the crisis is the element of surprise. So it is in every hour of great temptation. When a person is called upon suddenly, he discovers a weakness which had been unsuspected. Jesus stated the experience of mankind when he said, "If the man of the house knew at what watch in the night the thief was coming, then he would have watched, and not suffered his house to be broken through." But we do not know, we cannot know. In the great emergencies we find ourselves taken by surprise.

And in a different way this is true of those things which we know are inevitable. We know that they are coming some time, but the time and the occasion are in

doubt. We are astonished that that should happen to-day which we had put off to a vague to-morrow. It is not easy for one generation to transmit its dearly bought wisdom to another. The father tries to teach his son the lessons which he himself has learned through sad experience; but he is speaking in an unknown tongue. The son hears, but he does not understand. How can he? Each generation has to face the same old questions as if they were altogether new.

Now because all this is true, because at unexpected times the great crises come to us and find us not ready for them (in many respects surprised at their appearance), there are those who draw the conclusion that there is no real preparation of soul possible. "All things come alike to all," the author of Ecclesiastes said sorrowfully. There are some things which we have to meet and to bear, some lessons which we have to learn. We get through the hard lessons some way. We

endure because we have to endure. There is no escape for us. Why not, then, take each day as it comes, not asking ourselves very much about the future, not seeking very earnestly any preparation?

The answer lies, I think, in this: that, while there can be no preparation for the future, in the sense of clear foreknowledge and accurate adjustment to a specific situation, there is another kind of preparation which is possible,— a preparation not for the single event, but for every event that comes,— a preparation that goes far deeper into our nature than any single experience.

That which happens to us in the moral and spiritual life is just that which happens to every educated young man. The young man leaves college, having spent years in discipline, and he expects to find some immediate use for that discipline. He imagines that he is prepared for the distinct work that he has to do. Scarcely a month has passed before he is

thrown almost into despair. Theory is so different from practice. Questions which he had been asked and had answered in the school are put in such unexpected forms in real life. All the circumstances are so strange to him that he says to himself, "Here is a problem that has not been solved by my preparation in college, and all that work is therefore a failure."

Is it a failure? The very way in which that young man faces his life shows that it has not failed. His education indeed may not have answered the specific questions of practical business life; it may not have solved any problem that is now presented. But he has been taught to face everything that comes to him *as a problem*, not as something to be left as vague as he finds it, but as something to be analyzed, to be studied, to be understood. All these years he has been doing just that thing. One problem after another has come to him that has at first

puzzled him; and there has come the habit of concentrating his thought upon the problem of the day.

When he recovers himself, he faces his new life in that way. Here are practical problems, just as before there had been theoretical problems, and he faces these things with intelligent courage. And after a little he finds that he has been prepared for the successful life, with the preparation of the whole mind, and most of all through the habit of bringing to bear his intelligence upon the matter in hand. The trained soldier may find himself in an unusual position with foes strongly entrenched, with scarcely an idea as to how the battle is to be won. But, just because he is a trained soldier, he has learned some things,—that he must go forward, that he must face the difficulty instead of fleeing from it, that his business is to obey orders, and, "having done all, to stand." An army, however unsuccessful it is, is just because of its discipline superior to any mob.

Moral Discipline

In every free government we have crises which come from time to time, questions for which there can be no immediate solution; parties are ranged against each other, issues are joined; there is no willingness on either side to compromise. And yet in a nation that has a past, that has been disciplined in the fundamental ideas of freedom and of law, people meet these crises without dismay because they know that there are some fundamental principles common to all parties, that there is a limit to party strife. When this limit is reached, the minority in some way must yield. The majority must rule according to the ideas and the principles of the nation's constitution. That in itself is a triumph: it is a tribute to the work of preparation for freedom which has gone on.

Is it not in this way that we see the real purpose of moral and spiritual discipline? It is not that the disciplined soul can answer at once the difficult questions

that come; that the man whose whole life has been given to the service of God does not sometimes stand at a point where all is dark, where for the moment he does not see God, or truth, or the way of righteousness. Again and again he exclaims, "Out of the depths do I cry unto thee." You read the lives of the greatest believers, and from time to time you hear outcries of a soul in pain. This is the burden of the old Psalms: they were written by men who were lonely and heart-sick, bereaved and despondent. And yet that despondency is not utter despair. We know that there is abiding confidence and peace. We know that, when the man says, "I cannot see, I do not know, I look now upon one side and now upon the other, and I do not see God," he yet believes in God. He has learned to believe in the God who is not seen, and in the peace which passeth all knowledge.

We sometimes misinterpret that beauti-

ful text which tells us that "as our hour, so shall our strength be," as if when the crisis comes, calling for a great faith or a great virtue, the crisis itself creates the power by which it is to be met. I think we do not find that ever to be the case. When the crisis comes, it calls out whatever heroism may have already existed, just as when a great danger to a nation comes it calls out the great man if the great man be actually there. The great man may have been unknown before, living in some quiet way, unrecognized by his neighbors, but then the call comes, and the man is ready. That doesn't mean that he has suddenly become great. The real savior of the nation is usually the man who was unknown till the nation called, but he had always had just the qualities which he showed in the time of danger. And we find that these qualities are common qualities. He is "rich in saving common sense, and, as the greatest only are, in his simplicity sublime." He

is a man who always has been "to true occasion true." There have been little occasions that have called him heretofore: now the great occasion calls, and he is true to that,— that is all. To face death, to overcome a temptation that tries the temper of the soul, to do in some hour of trial the thing that ought to be done, all this requires a training in every-day faithfulness.

Wordsworth described poetry as "emotion remembered in tranquillity." Moral strength may be defined conversely. It is a principle discovered in tranquillity, and remembered in time of emotion. The great emotion does not of itself give insight. There are times when things come to us against which we rebel. We are ready to "curse God and die": they seem so contradictory to a divine order of things. And the questions which we ask at such times are many of them questions which cannot be answered, for the very mood in which we ask prevents the

true answer. Then it is that we fall back upon memory and habit. In the hour of trial we resolve simply to be loyal to our own best insight, to what we have felt and thought in hours of tranquillity.

Alas for that soul which has had no hours of tranquillity, and that in those hours has never pondered the solemn miracle of life, has never asked: "What am I? What is my place in this universe? How am I to face my own ignorance, my own limitation? How am I to strengthen an immortal hope that shall be to me a help in the hour of trouble?" Because, when worst comes to worst, we have no help save in our own best. We "rally the good in the depths of ourselves." Every great hope springs from a great memory; every great decision grows out of the habits of the soul. Read the Twenty-third Psalm. How tranquilly it begins: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He leadeth me in the green pastures and beside the still waters."

That is the lesson of experience, that is the argument for whatever of lofty hope and cheer there may be in the darkest hour. He has led me by the still waters. Then the earnestness of struggle comes. The man is no longer by the still waters. There is a choice to make, and it is a difficult one. Still the same power is there. Remembering the still waters, there comes the faith that the same power is to help in the more difficult way. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." The man with all that experience of the quiet life with God behind him, and the experience of the difficult path of moral choice (God with him in the quietness and God with him in the struggle), faces at last the greatest struggle of all, with its mysterious questioning. It is exactly the same power that must be here, and the same spirit in himself abiding that shall give the comfort. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear

no evil: thou art with me." That is the way God prepares us for the future, that is the way by which strength comes when most we need it.

Nothing is more painful than to try to speak to an unprepared soul in a time of personal trial. What can one say to one who has lived selfishly, measured all things by a worldly standard, clung selfishly to friends, to life itself, never learned what disinterestedness means, nor the calm which comes through the habitual consciousness of an eternal power? Then, when that which the soul clung to is taken away, there comes the sudden bitter cry: "Why has all this evil come upon me? Why am I singled out for sorrow and for loss? Who shall justify the ways of God to me?" There is no answer, and there can be no answer to that mood. It is the mood of the spoiled child that makes impossible demands. True wisdom is of slow growth. It comes to one who from the beginning has faced steadily

the actual, and has interpreted it in the light of the ideal. He has taken account of sorrow and change. He has behind him the experience of trial and of victory. He began with the religion of the child, in quietness and in joy, with uncontradicted faith, walking with the Eternal, then growing steadily in faith and strength through the battles won, and at last facing the supreme emergency. One who has thus lived is prepared for all that comes. He says: "Ever as I struggled, I found behind me divine power, and to that power I trust myself now." Not as a surprise, but simply as the fulfilment of the whole life, comes that great change through which he enters into the more intimate presence of God.

VIII

On the Study of the Bible

ON THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE

No revolution in thought is more startling than that which has taken place in regard to the Bible. What is the Bible? The traditional answer, which the founders of our great Protestant churches accepted, had the advantage of being simple and direct. The Westminster Confession, in carefully chosen language, declared: "It pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare His will unto His people, and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth to commit the same wholly unto writing. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or may by good and

necessary inference be deduced from Scripture, unto which nothing is at any time to be added, either by new revelations of the Spirit or by traditions of men."

According to this theory the Bible is a book altogether free from error, written by God himself, through the agency of certain favored saints. It is no wonder that, so long as this opinion was received without question, the Bible was the most interesting book in the world. Those textual discussions which to us seem so dry were once full of most intense life. The study of the universe could not compare with the study of the Scriptures. God indeed had made the universe, but it was vast and perplexing, full of contradictions. The universe was a puzzle; but in the Bible God had given us the key to it. Would we get at the essential truth concerning our own origin and destiny, here we might find it written down in infallible words. There was no need to urge people to search the Scriptures.

Such a mine of rich ore, or rather such a treasure-house full of the unalloyed gold of truth, it would be the most transparent folly to neglect.

But all this has been changed. The Bible stood against the attack of its enemies; but the theory of its infallibility has been undermined through the patient investigations of its friends. No pious sophistry can conceal the plain fact that a book in which unmistakable errors have been discovered cannot be infallible. Marks of human limitation appear everywhere. The theory of a book miraculously perfect in all its parts breaks down. The present tendency of the defenders of the old doctrine is to assert infallibility only in regard to what cannot be tested. The Scriptures, as we now have them, we are told, may contain errors, but we are bidden to believe that the original manuscripts were inerrant. A more absurd refuge for a discredited dogma could scarcely be imagined.

But what remains of the Bible when the doctrine of its miraculous origin and authority is given up? Many people throw it aside altogether. This is natural enough. In the church of the Latter Day Saints the Book of Mormon is accepted as a direct revelation from God, and is studied reverently; but, when one comes to disbelieve the story of its origin, the book is thrown aside. The reason is that it has in itself no value. But is this true in regard to the Bible?

The verdict of the most competent critics is that it is not true. They find an intrinsic value, which makes it altogether independent of the stamp which the Church has put upon it. After all deductions have been made, we must admit that there is that in these writings which still challenges the attention of the world.

Let us frankly admit the human limitations. The Bible is a human book and had a natural growth. But, unless we have a very poor idea of humanity, this

will not make us turn away with contempt. We may here see the diviner side of humanity. We may see it struggling upward through its ignorance and its sin into a purer air. We may hear its song of triumph as it catches sight of its far-off goal.

The Bible is the literature of a little nation; but it was a nation with a peculiar genius for religion. Within the narrower limits of the ancient world the life of a nation sometimes turned in one direction, and produced masterpieces which later ages have not equalled. Many have been the advances in knowledge since the days of Plato, but our busy, many-sided modern life has found no substitute for the great works and great thoughts of Greece. The fire still burns on the old altars, and thither pilgrims go to light their torches. Such fire remains also on the ancient altars of Israel.

What may one expect to find in the Bible? If he expects a final answer to

every question, he will be disappointed. What he may find is a vivid record of the growth of religion,—a record written "at sundry times and in divers manners," but always with power. It is the story of religious development given by eye-witnesses of the progress.

He may find traditions of remote antiquity, glimpses of holy men, seen through mists, walking with God along the far mountain summits of time. Perhaps he may hear words of lofty cheer from those who had not yet lost "the large utterance of the early gods." Tracing the history, he may learn, not simply how individuals, but how nations grow into spiritual life and faith; how from crudest nature-worship they grow into the thought of God as the "high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy"; how through ages of patient endurance the thought grows tenderer, until at last the Eternal, who loves righteousness, becomes also the Father, who

loves even his most sinful children. Here one may watch the growth of ideals of human greatness as the procession passes down the ages. Nomadic chieftains, wandering over the deserts and building altars by the way; border warriors lifting hands yet red with blood in prayer to their tribal God; Oriental despots, passionate, vindictive, yet with a not unreal halo of sainthood around their heads; wild-eyed hermits, issuing from the fastnesses of the rock and pronouncing the doom of princes with a stern "Thus saith the Lord"; preachers of righteousness, denouncing alike the evils of temple and court and market-place, and declaring a God who despised burnt-offerings and sought only the contrite heart; exiles in a far country, dreaming of the new king and the better country. At last, in the fulness of time, through numberless disappointments, the old ideals of earthly glory fade away and the nation comes to recognize a new order of excellence,— the

excellency of a manhood clothed with humility and crowned with suffering, as Israel finds its highest ideal in "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Here one may meet with almost every phase of individual experience. Israel had no genius for abstract philosophy. There was no Academy in Jerusalem, no Plato, no Aristotle. But for life-philosophy, the results wrought out by the personal struggles of men left alone with their own sorrows and seeking a way out of them, I know not where we can find a parallel to these Scriptures. "No man without trials and temptations," said Luther, "can attain to a true understanding of the Holy Scriptures." It needs not so much critical scholarship as personal experience, to interpret these tragedies of the soul.

We talk of the simplicity of the Greek drama, with its few actors and its relentless unfolding of destiny. But simpler still is the Hebrew drama. In Job we see the stricken sufferer and his would-be com-

forters facing the unsolved problem of sorrow, with only the passionless calm of the desert for a background, until from the whirlwind comes the voice of the Eternal rebuking alike the wild repining of the sufferer and the cold consolations of his friends.

In the book of Ecclesiastes we may study the workings of the mind of an Oriental sceptic. He doubts whether life is good; he has no faith in immortality, nor in human wisdom, nor in any lasting success. But in the storm of doubt his soul is held by one anchor, his conviction that there is a God. He is a deist, and his conviction, though too colorless to greatly cheer him, at least keeps him from absolute despair. "Let us not be over-much wise," he says, "nor over-much righteous"; but, after all, there is a God, and it is better to keep his commandments.

How like a step into the sunlight it is to come out of the dark, close room,

where the world-weary philosopher sits brooding, into the temple courts where we hear the sweet assurance of the Psalms, or into the market-places where the listeners are thrilled by the generous ardor of the prophets! Here, indeed, are words brimming over with eternal life. Nations come and go, but the songs sung on the Judean hills, centuries before the Cæsars, have not lost their power to make melody in the heart. They never grow obsolete, these

> "Swallow flights of song that dip
> Their wings in tears, and skim away."

Nor, while there are rulers who refuse to do justice, and there are rich men who grind the faces of the poor, and the multitude prefers private gain to the public good, will the prophets become obsolete. Still we hear them crying as of old against false princes and false priests and false people: "Thou art a land that is not cleansed; her priests have violated

my law and profaned my holy things; her princes in the midst of her are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, and to get dishonest gain. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully."

When all goes well, and we are at ease in our little Zions, these writings seem enigmatical, but in times of moral awakening men instinctively turn to them and understand them. So Jesus at the beginning of his ministry turned to the prophet who wrote of the glad tidings to the poor. So in the midst of Roman persecution a half-frenzied Christian heard over the new Babylon of the West the prophetic doom upon an unrighteous civilization, and cried exultingly: "Babylon is fallen! is fallen!" So to the prophets Chrysostom turned when he would rebuke the corruption of the Eastern Empire; and Savonarola when he would bring fickle Florence to repent-

ance; and the old words came unsought to Theodore Parker as he saw the lava torrent of wrath, uncooled by the ages, rolling down upon all oppressors.

Were the prophecies fulfilled? Yes, a thousand times. As often as the justice of the universe is vindicated and the refuges of lies swept away, as often as a new word of cheer comes to the poor, so often it can be said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." In the new experience the old words live again, and we realize

> "From what agonies of heart and brain,
> What exultations trampling on despair,
> What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,"

they came.

Such are the Scriptures, the records of a gifted race in its search after God, a literature whose central thoughts are righteousness and worship. We cannot neglect them without loss to ourselves. The

Bible must take its place as a part of the world's literature, but we may be sure that it will be a high place. No serious criticism has affected the estimate of its intrinsic value. The flippant jests of those who treat it with scorn have influence only with those who are ignorant of its real history.

Was the Bible inspired? Our answer must depend on what is meant by inspiration. One who believes that every good gift is from above, and that the unfolding of intelligence is itself a revelation, is not averse to the idea of inspiration which the author of the Wisdom of Solomon gives: "I myself am a mortal man like to all. . . . I called upon God and the spirit of Wisdom came to me. I loved her above strength and beauty. . . . For Wisdom is more moving than any motion. She is the breath of the power of God, a pure influence from the glory of the Almighty. She is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of

the power of God and the image of his goodness. She maketh all things new, and in all ages, entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets."

We cannot, in our thought, confine this influence to the Bible, but we can hardly fail to recognize it there.

As you read, do you come in contact with men who loved wisdom more than health or beauty? In the words of the prophets do you feel breaths of power sweeping down upon you from sublime heights? In the eyes of heroes of the antique world do you see the brightness of the everlasting light? In some sweet Psalm do you find new and nobler meanings till you are sure that you are looking into the depths of a serene soul that has become a "mirror of the power of God and the image of his goodness"? Then theories of inspiration will not trouble you, for you already have the fact of which the theories have been attempted explanations.

IX

Our Historic Inheritance

OUR HISTORIC INHERITANCE

Those who have been reared in a newly settled country are likely to be peculiarly impressed by any thing which savors of antiquity. The children of pioneers make the most reverent pilgrims to historic shrines. They find something for which their souls have been starving. To walk along paths which have been trodden for generations, and to look upon scenes which are associated with the lives of great men, is a keen joy. The landscape becomes more beautiful because poets have praised it. Turning from things which still are in the making, they feel delight in all that has been softened by the touch of time.

It is with this feeling that many persons to whom religion has been associated with independent thought comes to the

idea of an historic church. It brings something new into their lives, and it appeals powerfully to their imaginations. They had been accustomed to consider religion only in its individualistic aspects. It was concerned only with the salvation of single souls. Now they catch a glimpse of a public service and an enduring corporate life. The emphasis is changed from independence, with its jealous insistence on personal rights, to a gracious acknowledgment of dependence upon that which is larger than one's self.

The independent thinker is pioneer: he has all the virtues of the pioneer, but he has also his limitations. It is a great thing for him to go, in his sturdy strength, into the wilderness and make a clearing for himself, and build a home after his own plan; but those who have been born in the clearing dream of something more beautiful. They dream of the beauty of fields which have been tilled for ages, and of homes which have been sanctified by

long association. When they are in this mood, they are ready to listen to the claims of an historic church. One comes and says to the child of religious independency: "After all, is there not something very crude and very narrow in your position? You are anxious in your self-consciousness to tell what you think and what you feel,—to test everything for yourself. You are very much afraid lest you may be led to accept something which is not absolutely true: you have a great confidence that you are able, by the exercise of your individual reason, to distinguish the true from the false. Is there not a good deal of self-conceit in this, and of the self-assertion which belongs to those who have not measured themselves against the great things of the world? Is it not as if one were to come to the university, not in a teachable frame of mind, not desirous of getting the benefit of the tradition of scholarship for which the university stands, but thinking only of himself

and of his own personal opinions, jealous of his intellectual liberty, and anxious to tell what he has already thought about science or philosophy? The answer of a riper reason would be, It matters very little what you think: the great thing is that you should be ready to learn. These questions which you imagine that you can settle for yourself are greater and more difficult than you think. The profoundest intellects have been at work upon them. The first lesson for you to learn is that of humility. You must sit at the feet of those who are competent to teach you."

Is there not something like this to be said about religion? It is not a new thing. Why should any one person think himself competent to pass judgment upon it? The historic church stands not for what one man thinks nor for the opinions of a single generation. It stands for the experience of ages. What can inexperience do but listen reverently to its words of wisdom?

Our Historic Inheritance

There are many things in the claims of the Catholic Church, and in a lesser degree in those of the Anglican communion, that appeal to deep sentiments of the soul. The claim of an apostolic succession in the Christian ministry attracts the imagination. It suggests the identity of the life of the spirit. It is a tradition of piety by which the individual is re-enforced.

The thought of an historic church brings the idea of a real communion,—the communion not merely with a little band immediately around us, but with a great multitude scattered over the earth. There is something very persuasive in the words of Saint Augustine, speaking of the apostle John and of the grace which comes to those who look up to truly great and venerable men. "This John," he says, "was one of those mountains concerning which it was written, 'Let the mountains receive peace for thy people, and the hills righteousness.' The mountains are the lofty souls: the hills are the

little souls. The smaller souls would not receive faith unless the greater souls were illuminated by wisdom. The hills live by faith because the mountains receive peace." Only a very self-conceited person will fail to feel the charm of such words. We do not live merely by our own thoughts; we cannot live on mere abstractions; we long to see persons who are filled with the qualities we revere. Something in our hearts responds to the call of loyalty and to the idea of discipleship.

An historic church, moreover, offers us not merely communion with the greatest souls and those whose opinions we can accept, but it brings us into a real fellowship with the great multitudes of the lowly, of the weak, of the ignorant. The advanced thinker, as he calls himself, trusting in his own thought, becoming a pioneer, and going out into the wilderness, is likely to cut himself off from association with others, whose thought may lag behind.

But the acceptance of an historic religion means sympathy not only with the thoughtful and the progressive, but it reaches back through all the stages of superstition and ignorance to the very childhood of the soul, and it makes us feel that we belong to a great family. In this great family are the children with their fairy tales, as well as the wise men with their philosophy: the Holy Church includes them all. That is to many minds the fascination in the claims of the Roman Catholic Church. In this sense it is truly catholic: it has breadth of fellowship and a warm human sympathy from which our sectarianism often cuts us off. Cardinal Newman says: "What the Catholic Church once has had she never has lost; never has she wept over, or been angry with, the times past and gone. Instead of passing from one stage of life to another, she has carried her youth and middle age along with her, even to the latest time. She has not changed posses-

sions: she has accumulated them, and brought out of her house things new and old." He tells us how the Church has not lost the early hermits, monks, and saints, while she has passed beyond their thought. They belong to the Church once: they belong to the Church still. Even though she has been the mother of a new race of men, she still clings lovingly to those who went before. All these saints belong to her, and she loves them all.

The Protestant accuses the Catholic of spiritual tyranny in setting up an authority over the individual conscience. The Catholic answers that what the masses of men most need is not more freedom, but rather wise and firm guidance along the upward way. They are discouraged and bewildered, and they need those whose word is definite and whose faith is clear. Here is an extract from a sermon of a Dominican friar at the dedication of a church for working people. Speaking of

the work of the order of Saint Dominic, the preacher says: —

"They have come to dwell in your midst to be your teachers and your friends. Life is for most of us a path rough enough and dangerous enough at best, and we often stand in need of a guide and a friend. How hard it would be to stand alone and plod along alone! How gladly do we welcome the kind, helping hand that is ready to sustain us when we stumble, and to help us when we fall! How eagerly do we listen to a voice that comes to encourage us when our heart is sinking and our courage fails at the difficulty of our work! What a help it is to find some friend, kindly and sympathetic, who can feel for us in our weakness and even in our sin, and help us to return to the path from which we have strayed! All this you will find that the sons of Saint Dominic have come to do for you. They have come with a full measure of the great founder's love of souls."

The idea of an historic church reaching back into the ages when our civilization began, and because it has such a history reaching out to all conditions of men, and embracing them all, is one which is very appealing. It is no wonder that many who have been wearied with sectarianism should turn their backs on modern liberalism, in order to gain what their hearts crave.

But is it necessary to yield to the claims of ecclesiasticism in order to come to the sense of religion as something that is historic and that has a wide fellowship?

The modern student of history discovers that religion as a spirit and a life antedates all the churches that are at present in existence. The Roman Catholic Church is, after all, modern. In Italy the temples of an older faith, venerable when it was young, have been awkwardly adapted to its uses. It appears as a newcomer in the religious world. When seriously studied, all institutions are seen

to be made up of material older than themselves. What, then, is ancient? What is venerable?

The inquiring mind, the primal awe, the love, the courage, the hopefulness of the devout spirit,— these are the elements out of which all religious institutions came. Here we have something ancient, and at the same time something ever new.

History gives us the record of the development of the higher life. It is continuous: there is a succession of men of the spirit. Religious ideas are broadened and purified as the ages pass. The makers of this history were men who were compelled to choose between a formal and conventional line of succession and one that was vital and spiritual. In making the brave choice, they seemed to be cutting themselves off from the past. For the moment it seemed as if they were going into the desert places. Listen to the Hebrew prophet as he cries, with a

pathetic sense of isolation from the human, while he clings all the more closely to the divine, "Thou art our Father, though Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us: thou, O Lord, art our Father." That expresses the feeling of independency in religion. It has a strong grasp upon essential truth, but it has lost for a moment the inspiration which comes from a venerable tradition. The brave spirit, even in its worship, has a certain sense of loneliness.

Then comes the other thought, which we find in the New Testament when Christianity was just beginning. To some the new faith seemed to destroy the old sympathies, and to be the renunciation of the old loyalties. Then Paul says, in effect: "After all, are we not doing in our day and generation just what our fathers in their greatest moments did? We talk about being cut off from the religion of our fathers, as if we no longer had a share in the glorious memories, as if we no longer

belonged to Abraham. Go back and see what Abraham did in his day. What is it that made him venerable, that makes his name reverenced still? The great moment in his life was that in which he left his father's house, and in obedience to conscience went out, he knew not whither. That was the supreme act of faith in the old patriarch. Abraham believed God, went directly to God, obeyed the word of truth that came to him; and that has been counted to him as righteousness. Now another crisis in the world's history has come. We must judge between a dead tradition and a living faith, between following scribes and Pharisees and believing God. 'Thou art our Father,' we say, 'though Abraham be ignorant of us.' Yes, but Abraham is not ignorant of us: Abraham did just what we are trying to do." So Paul argues triumphantly for simple faith in God. Those who believe God are the true sons of Abraham.

Do we not here find the real line of

historic continuity? The same ideals that wrought mightily in the past reappear. The same kind of character makes itself felt again. The idea of apostolic succession is but a faint and imperfect symbol of what has always been taking place.

> "From heart to heart, from creed to creed,
> The hidden river runs:
> It quickens all the ages down,
> It binds the sires to sons."

To follow the main current is not always easy, for the river is continually changing its channel. We must seek the real enthusiasms and the living interests of men, and not rest content with conventionalities. There are certain great causes which have power to enlist the loyal service of men, generation after generation. They never become "dead issues." In all the variety of circumstance they are essentially the same.

The struggle for personal liberty is one whose history reaches back into the re-

motest antiquity. The battlefields change continually, but the battle goes on. Always there are the two sides. On the one side are men imbued with the principles of absolutism. They are believers in uniformity. They would use all possible force to reduce all things to their own will. On the other side are men who revere the soul, and who believe in its free and direct access to the sources of truth. They are tolerant of the variations of thought. They are hopeful, enthusiastic, energetic. They think of themselves as "soldiers in the great battle for the liberation of humanity."

It is easy to recognize the men who have been inspired by this ideal. What a noble succession of liberators! The despotism which they oppose changes its form from age to age. Now it is the usurpation of kings, now the arrogance of priests, now the insolence of wealth. But always the tyrant has been confronted by the free spirit, which cannot

be bribed or intimidated. It is the spirit which flashed forth in the reply of Nehemiah to those who urged him to give up his work, and seek safety in the temple. "Should such a man as I am go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

Men of that temper have conquered for us a place of freedom, and by men of that temper our liberties are preserved. The history of liberty takes us far beyond the confines of any one church, and introduces us to a great company which no man can number. Each by his effort and willing self-surrender has added something to our heritage.

Or take the conception of religion not as a dogma or a ritual, but as an interior joy and peace, a spiritual communion. This also has had its line of development. There is a history of simple piety. To this line belong poets like Whittier, and preachers like Channing, and mystics like Tauler and Thomas à Kempis, and saints

like Francis of Assisi who needed not to be canonized. We follow the line of succession till we come to the hill of the beatitudes, and listen to the blessing upon the pure in heart who see God. And the line did not begin there. Jesus recognized the type when, looking upon Nathanael, he said, "Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile."

Or it may be that your chief interest is in the practical application of the principles of religion to social life. In philanthropy and in the eager desire for justice, you see something that evokes your enthusiasm. Here, again, you are on historic ground. You are standing where two streams meet,— the stream of ethics and the stream of religion. From the beginning we may see men who seek justice, and we may see men who walk humbly before their God. At last the two impulses blend, and you find those who see in righteousness the truest worship. Out of the attempt to unite these

two elements have come the revolutions and reformations which make so large a part of the story of religion. The work is still unfinished, it is the uncompleted task which each generation leaves to that which follows it.

Over against the idea of one historic church, monopolizing all that is sacred, stands the immeasurably greater idea of historic religion. It is the difference between the perennial stream and its temporary channel. When once we conceive of the universality of the religious sentiment, its naturalness and its inevitableness, we no longer think it possible to limit its manifestation to any one institution. All exclusive claims savor of sectarianism. Our real allegiance must be to the church invisible which is ever organizing itself anew to meet the demands of the new day.

X

How Religion is Organizing Itself

HOW RELIGION IS ORGANIZING ITSELF

When we turn from the history of the triumphs of religion in the past to its manifestation in contemporary life, we are likely to be discouraged. The first impression is that of a decadent influence. Once all human activities were under the immediate direction of a spiritual authority. For the greater glory of God and under the rule of the church all that concerned the higher life was done. Pictures were painted, schools were established, books were written, works of charity were undertaken, all from one motive. There was close connection between prayer and labor. A great spiritual empire was acknowledged.

The movement of the last three centuries has been away from this organization

which had the church for its centre. The several arts and sciences have one after another declared their independence of ecclesiastical control. This process of secularization has gone on till it has included the two forms of activity which seemed peculiarly to belong to the church,—education and charity. A generation ago the president of a college was almost necessarily a clergyman. To-day the profession of teacher has no connection with the ecclesiastical order. The public schools and the undenominational colleges have flourished. The institutions under churchly control are likely to assume an apologetic attitude, as if they were more or less under suspicion. Modern philanthropy boldly criticises the methods of alms-giving which were practised by the saints, and it has established new standards of its own.

What does all this mean from the standpoint of the believer in religion? If we identify religious organization with some

form of ecclesiasticism with which we happen to be familiar, then it means that our civilization is rapidly drifting away from all that is spiritual, and is becoming materialized. It would seem as if the old ideal of the kingdom of God were fading away.

But is this the view of the understanding heart, the heart that clings to the things that are sacred?

We must free ourselves from a mechanical view of organization, and learn to appreciate one that is vital.

> "For of the soul the body form doth take;
> For soul is form, and doth the body make."

We are not concerned with the fortunes of the ecclesiastical body, but with the manifestation of the soul. In what form does the soul organize itself? This is the question which must be asked anew of each age. We must not expect the forms to be repeated, for each age has its own body.

The Understanding Heart

Christianity in the apostolic age organized itself in a simple and effective fashion for its missionary work. It was not a contrivance: it was a growth. Later on, when dreams of world-wide dominion came, the ambitious thoughts took form in an elaborate system of priestcraft. When the desire came for a clear understanding of its faith, there was the organization of dogma in bodies of divinity. When ascetic ideals were dominant, there was the organization of monasteries and of all kinds of brotherhoods. With the awakened thought of the Reformation era came the impulse to free investigation, and the organization of new sects was inevitable.

What are the dominant ideals and the passionate desires of the most earnestly religious men to-day? You will find that they are not those of the old theologians, nor of the ascetic saints, nor of the evangelical missionaries. There is no great ambition to build up a hierarchy or to

establish a final theology or to found a sect.

The finest spirits have other aims. They are more desirous of learning the simple truth than of completing a system. They have a distrust of any external authority, however lofty may be its claims. They feel that intellectual humility is fitting. The missionary zeal, which was inflamed by the thought that there was one form of faith to be imposed on all men, has given way to a disinterested service. It seeks not so much to convert men to a certain belief as to develop their own possibilities for good.

How shall this new impulse organize itself? We perhaps are thinking of some religious organization of the past, and we look for it to be repeated. Where is the "New Orthodoxy" or the "New Catholicism"? We have in mind a religious body standing over against the secular world.

But how do we know that such an

organization would express the most deeply religious spirit of our time? How do we know that the ecclesiastical model is the one which the free spirit would choose?

When we look sympathetically upon what is going on about us, we see that the higher life is organizing itself according to inevitable laws. It is because ideals have been purified and enlarged that the old ecclesiastical forms have been found insufficient. They do not express all that is really desired. They do not contain the answer to the prayers of earnest worshippers.

I think it is evident that just in proportion as a man's ideals are clearly conceived he will find in some of the so-called secular activities of the modern world the most natural and direct way of reaching his aim.

Take that prayer for righteousness. How shall the passionate desire for justice manifest itself? Not certainly in the

attempt to found a theocracy. That has been tried. It is a primitive form of organization. Not in a rule of priests, such as was seen in the Inquisition. That was a travesty on the idea of justice.

The work of organizing righteousness is a vaster and higher one than that. It has required more than a special order set apart from the rest of society. It has been the task of mankind. Kings, statesmen, jurists, plain citizens, all have united in it. The organic result is seen in laws, constitutions, social customs and restraints. All have as their object the protection of the weak against the despotism of the strong. The work is yet incomplete: our social order has not yet been thoroughly humanized and spiritualized. There are reforms which can only be accomplished by men who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the good of others. There must still be the spirit of the martyr, the willing witness to ideal righteousness. The field for this kind

of activity is in what we call secular life. The spirit which leads any man to devote himself to that kind of activity is one that is in its very nature religious.

Or consider the import of the prayer for truth. "Lead me into Thy truth," the devout soul cries. But how is the answer to come? Is it enough that one accepts without inquiry a formula which purports to be "the truth"? That is too easy an answer, and satisfies only a superficial nature. No, the real truth is to be discovered only through preparation of the mind for it, and through patient search. It is too great a task for one unaided intellect. There must be an organization of those who seek and find.

The man of understanding heart recognizes that there must here be no divided allegiance. He wishes to know the truth, and he is only confused by being told what is orthodox or what is respectable.

Who shall say that the organization of the truth-loving spirit is not more effective,

as it is more simple, in our day than in the days when the school and the college were bound by creeds and made mere feeders of the church? The secularization of education has meant the casting aside of an intolerable burden.

Or consider that supreme motive of the religious spirit,—love. Charity, we say, is the fulfilling of the law. To love our neighbor and to seek his welfare is to come to the very centre of such a religion as that which Jesus taught.

When the desire for service takes possession of any soul, all else seems to be of little worth. But how can one do the most for those who most need him?

Once the church furnished the means for all such service. When Francis of Assisi felt pity for the outcasts stirring within him, he found the old ecclesiastical machinery inadequate, but he doubted not that through the instrumentality of Holy Church his work could be accomplished.

In these days, philanthropy organizes

itself independently. We have associated charities, college settlements, and a host of organizations for special relief. The tendency of all of them is to declare themselves "non-sectarian." They do not desire to be the exclusive agents of any church.

When we inquire into the reason of this independence, we find that it arises from the fact that philanthropy has become more disinterested in its ideals. There must be no ulterior design on the beneficiary. He is not to be looked upon as a possible convert or adherent to church or chapel. Young men and women are taught to go among the unfortunate with absolute singleness of heart. They must refrain even from the luxury of alms-giving, if there is reason to suspect that the alms may be a curse rather than a blessing.

When John's disciples came to Jesus asking for his credentials as a prophet of God, the answer was, "Go and show John

the things that ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." When one inquires as to the manifestation of the religious spirit in these days, the same kind of answer may be given. Here are the things which are being done by organized effort. Lawlessness is repressed, the weak are protected, the poor are not only fed but helped to self-support, the sick are tenderly cared for and restored to health, the sanctity of the family is preserved by wise laws, thought is made free and education universal, the loneliness of the individual gives way to generous fellowship, the beauty and joy of the world are shed abroad, so that what yesterday belonged to the few is now given to the many. Is it too much to speak of these things as if they were accomplished facts? They, at least, are within the range of practical effort. Men and women do not

merely desire these things, but they are banded together in compact organizations for these objects. They are learning effective means of accomplishment.

To understand what is actually being done, you must not look in any church year-book. You must learn what is going on in courts of justice, in the best prisons and reformatories, in charity organizations and social settlements and asylums and children's aid societies, in reform clubs, in temperance societies, in public schools, in colleges, in trades-unions, in fraternal societies, in voluntary associations for personal improvement and social enjoyment. You must go further, and look sympathetically into political and business organization. You will find there, indeed, much to discourage. You will find the organization of greed. But you will also find the organization of righteousness. You will find clear-sighted and determined men in every community planning for the public welfare. You will find that the

Golden Rule is something more than a phrase: some of the best business talent in the world is committed to it. The idea of mutual benefit is not merely a theory: an increasing number of men are putting it into practice. It is a rich and varied institutional life that is being evolved. Could we but see it all, and recognize its spiritual basis, we should ask for nothing better than to have a share in it. No "age of faith" of which we read can show greater fruit.

But, when we have recognized the religious significance and the organic character of modern life, the question comes, What of the Church? We cannot recognize it any longer as the sole organ of the Spirit. It no longer can control all the forces of righteousness. Must it therefore pass away as something which no longer has a necessary function? Or must it be confined to some narrow and remote sphere apart from human interests?

I think that it is evident that the Church is passing through a crisis. It can no longer be just what it has been. When the theories of its miraculous origin and authority are given up, it can no longer over-awe the imagination. It cannot any longer claim a monopoly of the spiritual force of the community. We still read the chapters wherein Paul writes of the mystic body with its many members, to which we belong. We realize more than did our fathers how vital are our relations to it, so that, if one member suffers, all suffer with it. We know that no man liveth to himself. But, when we read, we are not thinking of any voluntary and limited society. The body to which we thus belong is not a particular church: it is the great social organism. That which hurts it is sin: to be cut off from healthful connection with it is the one schism to be feared.

The church is but a part of this body, just as the school or the political institu-

tion is a part. Its value depends upon what it contributes to the welfare of the whole.

And, when in disinterested fashion we seek the welfare of the whole, do we not come upon the necessary function of the Church? We have seen how the forces of a free humanity are naturally organizing themselves. Men long for truth, and they build institutions of learning. They love mercy, and the result is the manifold work of charity. They love justice, and justice is organized in law. They seek to overthrow evils which have been long intrenched in custom, and they plan campaigns in behalf of specific reforms.

But it is possible that in all these special activities the larger aspects may be forgotten. In the very intensity of zeal for a temporary good the lasting good may be neglected. The conservative, who would preserve the tested virtue of the past, may treat the reformer, who sees a still higher virtue to be won, as a foe. Is

there not a fellowship of the spirit which should be preserved? Is there not one common impulse which may manifest itself in a thousand forms? In a true organization must there not be a correlation of forces?

The great defect of our present civilization lies just here, in the lack of the consciousness of unity. There is a vast amount of specialized effort, but an imperfect sense of aggregate power. Individuals devoted to good causes are ignorant of one another, and of any common purpose.

It is possible that in a community in which there are multitudes of right-minded persons the public life may be corrupt. The forces of corruption are united and conscious of their strength, the forces of righteousness are divided.

How can the sense of spiritual and moral union be brought about? Here is need of an organization not for special ends, but for those which in their nature

are universal. There must be a thought large enough to take in all men in all their relations, there must be a fellowship based on permanent affinities, there must be a harmony deeper than any mere agreement in opinion. Let each man do his own proper work in his own way, but let all have a glad consciousness that they are members one of another.

There is one institution which, when freed from its accidental limitations, may form a basis for a fellowship which is broadly human. The church at present divides: the ideal church will unite. I have said that, to do the work needed by the modern world, the Church must be freed from its accidental limitations. These limitations are indeed the very things upon which our churches often most pride themselves. They put forth exclusive claims,— claims to an exclusive revelation, to exclusive sanctity, to a constituency of elect souls. In all this they are shutting the door against more religion than

they admit. They abdicate the great place of power in order to gratify a petty pride.

Let the Church give up every exclusive claim. Its real glory is in its inclusiveness. It belongs to God's good world. It is vitally related to the whole of humanity. It belongs to all men, and stands ready to serve them in their need. It is a brotherhood based on what is broadly human, on an inner faith, and not on a formulated opinion, on a hunger and thirst for righteousness, and not on a conventional standard, on the heart's sincere desire, and not on a particular attainment. It issues its broad invitation to "whosoever will," because it is the allegiance of the will that it desires. Amid all the diversity of gifts and varieties of useful activity, the men whose wills turn to truth and righteousness should form one firm fellowship.

To many religious persons, secularism is a bugbear. It seems to be the antith-

esis of the spiritual. When one consults the dictionary, he finds this idea embodied in one definition: "Secular: of or pertaining to the things of time and this world, and disassociated from or having no concern with religious, spiritual, or sacred matters or uses."

This usage expresses a common opinion, but the free church of the twentieth century denies its validity. It asserts the necessity for a nobler secularism. It returns to the primary signification of the word: "Secular: going on from age to age; accomplished or taking place in the course of ages; continued through an indefinite but long period; not recurrent or periodical, but permanent."

In this sense the Church is an organization which is pre-eminently secular. It has to do with permanent interests and principles. It interprets the life of to-day in the light of the experience of past ages, and it prepares for the ages that are to come. It has to do with time and the

things of this world, and its assertion is that these things cannot be disassociated from the spiritual and the sacred.

The nobler secularism which sees in this world the field of divine activities, and in the necessary work of man the opportunity for spiritual development, and in new moral issues the call for self-sacrifice, is needed, if civilization is to be preserved.

The so-called secularism which is in reality blind to what is permanent has shown itself incompetent to deal with the complicated conditions of modern life. We cannot live without ideals and hopes, and without the worship of that which is beyond our present attainment.

When the men who in their own hearts cherish high ideals recognize their social responsibility, they will see the necessity of an inclusive organization of those who are conscious of common needs, common purposes, common aspirations. It is not for the purpose of

gratifying the desire for good fellowship. It is in order to accomplish a work that can only be done when great multitudes with understanding hearts work together.

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